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*Immortality*

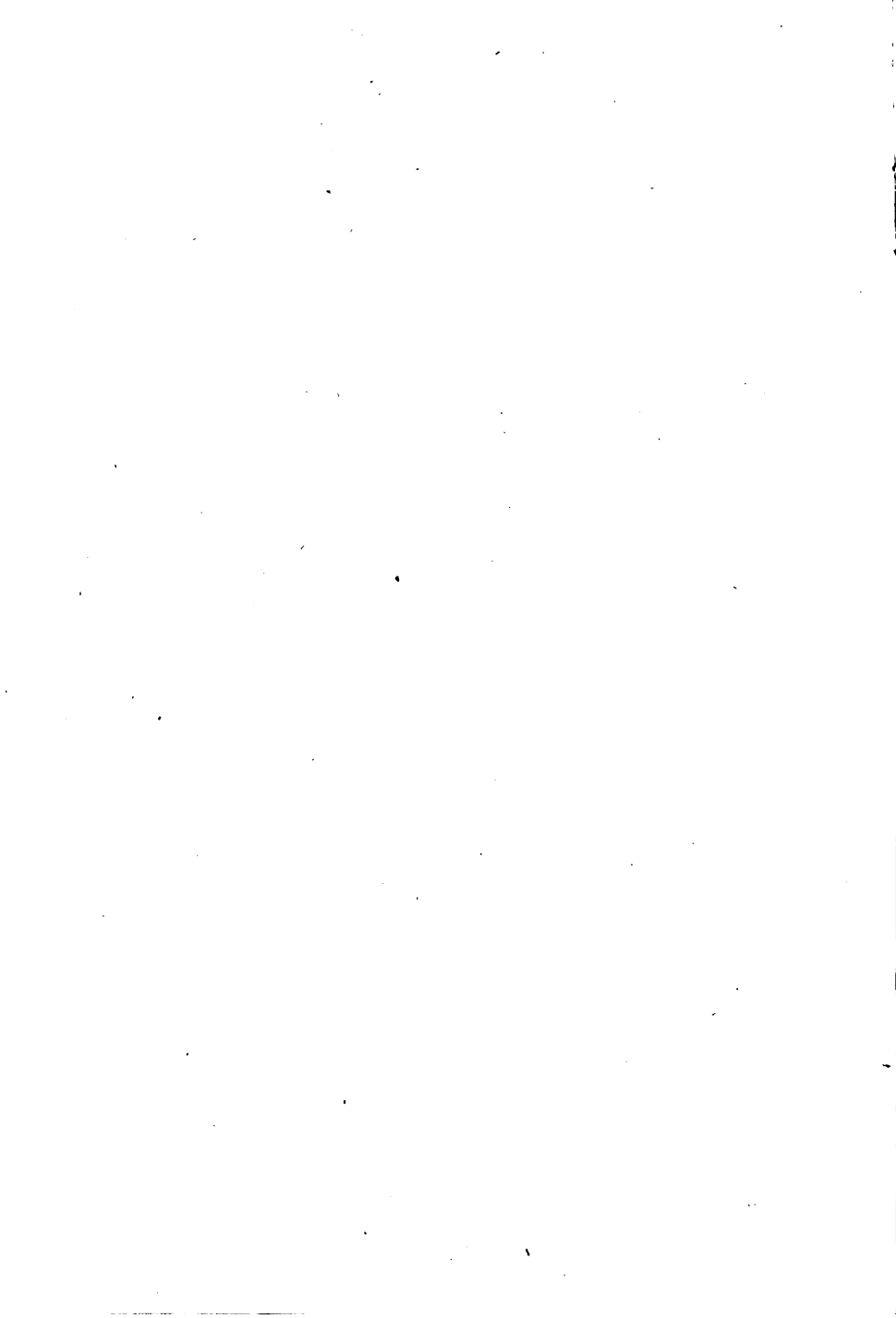
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# IMMORTALITY.



# I M M O R T A L I T Y.

A Clerical Symposium

ON

*WHAT ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BELIEF  
IN THE IMMORTALITY OF MAN.*

BY

THE REV. CANON KNOX-LITTLE, M.A.,  
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Immortality



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## PREFACE.

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ON a subject of such immense importance to all men as that of the "Foundation of Belief in Immortality," it is a great advantage to have the opinions of so many able writers focussed in one volume. Every contributor was selected because he had made a special study of the subject, had published something upon it, or had become a representative of a certain phase of thought or section of the Church. By means of this volume, many who had not seen the Symposium during its progress through the pages of the *Homiletic Magazine*, will be able to ponder the weighty arguments presented.

The way in which this subject has been treated, and the favour it has received as a Symposium, have led to the arrangement for a further symposium on the cognate subject of "Probation." The question, "Is salvation possible after death?" is now being

discussed in the *Homiletic Magazine*, and will also hereafter form a companion volume to this.

In America the volumes on "Atonement" and "Inspiration" have been received with great favour, and an edition of this Symposium has already been ordered.

EDITOR OF "HOMILETIC MAGAZINE."

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# SYMPOSIUM ON IMMORTALITY.

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*WHAT ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BELIEF  
IN THE IMMORTALITY OF MAN?*

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## ARTICLE I.

BY REV. PREBDY. CHAS. ADOLPHUS ROW, M.A.

VIEWING this subject in a purely abstract point of view, it would appear impossible to propound a question of deeper interest to the mind of man than the following : Will death be the end of my conscious existence ; and if it will not, will the actions which I have done here “follow me” in the influence which they will exert on my condition beyond the grave ? One would naturally suppose that the determination of this question, one way or the other, could not help exerting a powerful influence on a man’s conduct in life ; for if there be no hereafter, we have nothing to do but to make the best of this brief life, and die. But if, on the contrary, our conduct in this life will exercise a powerful influence on our condition in a

future state, for which this life is intended to be a preparation, it is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of so living in the present life as to ensure our happiness in the future. Yet it is an unquestionable fact that it is only a small minority of mankind on whom this consideration exerts a powerful influence; while on the great majority, even while they profess to believe in a state of retribution beyond the grave, the practical influence of this belief is extremely small.

Another fact equally striking, perhaps more so, is the uncertainty of our natural light respecting a future state of existence, and, assuming that there is one, of the consequences with which our actions here will be attended hereafter. If we view this subject on mere *a priori* principles, we might almost take it for granted that if it were the purpose of man's Creator to call him into judgment hereafter for his conduct here, He would not have left him in the smallest doubt on this subject, but that He would have made his belief in a future state of retribution one of his primary certainties—as certain, in fact, as those certainties which form our practical guides in life. Yet this is precisely what God has not done, but has left it to be inferred by a set of inferences more or less doubtful. However contrary this may be to our *a priori*

anticipations, the entire range of ancient thought prior to the Advent proves that such is the fact. The question whether a conscious existence remained for man after death formed one of the most important of the discussions of the philosophers of the ancient world, and on it they exhausted all their powers of reasoning. No small portion of these discussions have been transmitted to the present time. I think that it is impossible to read them without arriving at the conclusion that the belief of even the strongest asserters of a future state fell very far short of an actual certainty. Still more uncertain was their conviction that a future state—supposing one to exist—would be one of righteous retribution, in which virtue would be rewarded and vice punished, according to their deserts, and the inequalities of the present life would be redressed.

Yet a belief in some form of conscious immortality has been almost as universal as man : I say “almost universal,” because it is a matter of dispute whether it is possessed by some of the most degraded races of savages. Whence, then, has this belief originated ? It is evident that it is not one of the primary certainties of the human mind ; for if it were, no doubt respecting it would be possible : nor is it an intuition, or an instinct ; for if so, each of us



would be conscious of possessing it, which we are not. It must therefore be an inference of some kind ; and as this belief is entertained by multitudes whose reasoning powers are small, it must be one which is capable of being drawn by the most uncultivated intellects, unless the knowledge of it was communicated to primeval man by revelation.

Various have been the theories which have been propounded by modern philosophers and scientists to account for its origin. One of the most strange of these is, that primeval man, being a savage, destitute alike of the belief in a God or of anything within him distinct from his body, as time went on, inferred the existence of a soul from his power of dreaming, or from his unsubstantial shadow ; and from hence that he inferred the separate existence of the spirits of the dead, and ultimately the being of a God. But all this singular process of reasoning is far too complicated for the powers which our modern speculators are willing to assign to primeval man ; and the theory itself is a pure figment of the imagination. Numerous others have been propounded, of which perhaps one of the most simple is, that man is incapable of thinking of himself as non-existent ; and seeing that it frequently happened that his powers were in the fullest exercise immediately before death,

he drew the inference that there was something in him which had an existence independent of his body. Believers in Christianity, on the other hand, have been nearly unanimous in arriving at the conclusion that the belief in a future state was derived from a revelation made to primeval man by his Creator, and that from this source it has been handed down by tradition, which, in the course of transmission, has passed through various stages of corruption. Our existing data, however, are insufficient to enable us to determine with certainty how this all but universal belief has originated. The Christian theory is certainly by far the most simple and probable.

I think that we are justified in drawing the conclusion that the evidence on which the belief in a future state rested in the ancient world was comparatively weak, from the fact that, with a few exceptions, it seems never to have been used by the preacher of morality as an incentive to virtue or a deterrent from vice. Its influence was probably stronger in the Egyptian mind than in any other nation; but even here that influence was greatly evaporated through the belief that the purification of the soul could be effected through a number of very complicated ritual observances, as is testified by that singular production, the

Ritual of the Dead. The higher forms of Oriental belief on this subject, also, were not without some degree of moral value; but their influence for good was marred by being complicated with doctrines of Pantheistic fatalism, which finally degenerated into the popular doctrine of transmigration, the goal of which was the loss of personal conscious existence by its being ultimately absorbed in the Divine essence. Pantheism makes what we Christians designate sin, not man's sin, but his misfortune.

The effect of the popular belief in a future state was also greatly nullified as to any practical influence which it could exert for good owing to the ideas which it propounded respecting the condition in which spirits, when separate from their bodies, existed in the Underworld. The ghosts of the departed were conceived to be powerless, mere shadows of their former selves, only capable of recovering recollection by tasting blood. The current views on this subject are well expressed in the words which Homer puts into the mouth of the ghost of Achilles, to whom he assigns kingship among the shades. "I had rather," says the ghost, "be the meanest slave on earth than king among the shades." If this was the melancholy condition of one possessed of royal dignity in the

Underworld, we may form some idea of the dreary prospect which it must have presented to the ordinary man. It is true that in Virgil the picture of the condition of the shade of Anchises is a great improvement on that set forth in the Homeric poems; but this improvement did not represent the popular beliefs, but was the result of a particular class of philosophic speculations. The popular beliefs continued much the same for centuries, only gradually weakening in their intensity until they had become utterly inoperative. Thus we are informed by Juvenal, that in his time the beliefs in Tartarus and Elysium were so completely shaken that they were only influential to frighten children and old women. So little influence had the reasonings of the philosophers to confirm the popular belief in immortality, that they actually subverted the feeble foundation on which it rested. Thus the belief of the ancient world in the existence of the spirit of man after death, although it was capable of occasioning the erection of magnificent mausoleums, the celebration of elaborate funeral rites, and the institution of numerous outward observances, by means of which the spirits of the dead were supposed to be propitiated, was, as far as its moral efficacy is concerned, to adopt the language of St. James, a "faith without works,"

or a vague belief and aspiration, founded on no rational conviction.

On this point the writings of the philosophers speak for themselves. I think it impossible to peruse their arguments without feeling their weakness and inconclusiveness. Let us, as an illustration, briefly survey the reasons on which that philosopher of the ancient world who more profoundly than any other believed that he would survive the stroke of death urged in support of his conviction, as they are set before us by his great disciple in the *Phædo*. The scene there so graphically depicted professes to be a discussion which took place between Socrates and his disciples, only a few hours before he drank the hemlock, on the all-important question whether he would survive the stroke of death. In it he distinctly avers that he could only set before them probabilities; he would, in the circumstances in which he was, set before them certainties, but certainties he had not. In the midst of this uncertainty, however, he urged that he was on the safe side. If death terminated his existence, he would shortly sleep the sleep of unconsciousness, undisturbed even by a dream. But if his hopes of immortality were well founded, he was about to go to the gods, whom he believed to be good, and to exchange

this troubled scene for the society of the departed great and good, whom he expected to be able to question on points of the profoundest interest, without any such hindrances as he had experienced here. Such were the philosopher's real convictions at that trying moment. He hoped to survive the stroke of death; but yet he felt that he could affirm nothing as a certainty respecting it. But when we read his reasons for this hope, as they are set before us in this dialogue, we cease to wonder that they furnished him with no fulness of conviction. Not one of them would now be accepted as valid by any class of thinkers. Thus the philosopher infers the existence of the soul after death from his doctrine of its pre-existence before birth. The reasons for the latter belief are set forth in another dialogue, but they utterly fail to prove the point in question. Again, his argument from contraries is evidently founded on a most imperfect induction, and is therefore worthless. Nor is that based on the soul's being a harmony one whit more convincing; and painful is the impression produced when one of the interlocutors objects that, like as a harmony which is produced by a musical instrument perishes when the instrument is separated into its parts, so it may be, and probably will be, with the soul. Nor does the

reply of the dying philosopher furnish what can at the present day be accepted as even a plausible answer to the objection.

A similar inconclusiveness pervades the entire philosophical discussions of the ancient world in connection with this belief. It was a very favourite subject of debate, but we feel that we rise from their perusal without any feeling of profound conviction. The utmost which can be said is, that they afford grounds for hope. The words put into the mouth of a stout defender of the belief in immortality in one of the dialogues of Cicero form a striking illustration of the degree of the uncertainty in which this question was involved. He is made to say that, if the belief in immortality is a delusion, I hope that I may never be freed from that delusion as long as I live. Very different is a faith of this kind from that which is based on the affirmations of what is intensely believed to be a Divine revelation. In proof of this we need not refer to Christian martyrs, who have encountered death in its most frightful forms in the hope of a better resurrection. We may even appeal to non-Christian systems and the effects which a profound belief in a future state, when it was supposed to rest on an authoritative basis, were capable of producing. Nothing was more common in the early

days of Mahometanism than for the Saracen armies to rush into battle with the cry of "Victory or Paradise." All the reasonings of the philosophers of the ancient world would have failed to produce a result like this. Far more influential was the popular belief in a Nemesis which followed up and punished evil deeds. Yet its moral results were weakened, owing to the fact that this Nemesis was in a great degree a blind power, which made no distinction between voluntary and involuntary agents, but which followed up the deliberate murderer and the accidental homicide alike with vengeance. The popular ideas respecting this power are set forth in the writings of the poets; but the consequences with which it visited sin were for the most part confined to this world, in which it was only too evident that the adroit sinner frequently escaped with impunity, while the influence which it exerted on his condition in the Underworld was inconsiderable.

But nothing affords a stronger proof of the inability of reason alone to place the belief in a future state on a sure foundation than the position which it occupies in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. I am far from wishing to affirm that many of the psalmists and the prophets did not, in their higher moments, entertain a hope that



they should survive the stroke of death; but inasmuch as these Scriptures make it clear that the revelations which they record contain no direct affirmations of the existence of a future state, such hopes must have been the result of inferences of a more or less doubtful character. Hence the uncertainty on this subject apparent in even the most exalted saints. Nothing is more striking than the dark view which both psalmists and prophets take of death, and the rareness of any expression in their writings of a hope beyond the grave. Place the Book of Psalms beside the most ordinary Christian hymn-book, and mark the difference. Their walk with God was close, but this world is with them the one scene of life and joy. Here, not in a future state, the Divine providences are to receive their vindication; and the consequences which will follow sin in the world beyond the grave are never once directly held up as a warning to the sinner. Most of the psalms in which a reference is made to the Underworld—may I not say all of them?—depict that world as a state of darkness and of gloom, alike to the evil and the good.\*

Nor is it otherwise with the prophets. These

\* The Hell of the Psalms is Hades, the Underworld, the abode of departed spirits, not the place of future punishment.

vehement preachers of righteousness never hold up to the sinner the terrors of the unseen world, nor to the saint its hopes. Thus the most terrible threat which a prophet utters for the purpose of deterring the sinner from his evil ways is the cutting off of his family, that his dead body shall be devoured by the dogs, or that he shall be buried with the burial of an ass. I think that I am correct in saying that, with the exception of the Book of Daniel, there is not a single distinct reference throughout the prophetic Scriptures to the consequences with which sin will be attended in the unseen world. What is the natural inference from this? That the grounds on which the belief in a future state rested, even in the minds of psalmists and prophets, were exceedingly uncertain; and as far as it was popularly believed in, the condition of the inhabitants of the Underworld was viewed as affording little ground for hope or fear. Of the popular ideas on this subject the prayer of Hezekiah, as it is recorded by Isaiah, furnishes an adequate representation. "The grave," says he, "cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down to the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day: the father of the children shall make known Thy truth."

The silence of the Pentateuch on this subject is also most remarkable. The utmost that can be said is, that a future state can be inferred from one or more passages in it; but as a sanction it is never once referred to. Yet Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and the belief in a future state formed an important part of the teaching of that wisdom. Consequently he must have deliberately rejected its teachings respecting it from a place in his legislation, and have thought it better to trust to temporal sanctions only as having weight with the popular mind. View it, however, as we will, its exclusion is very difficult of explanation; but one thing it proves, viz., that the belief in it could not be made to rest on such a foundation of certainty as to render it capable of being used as a moral force; otherwise the total absence of all appeal to it is inexplicable.

No less striking is the evidence furnished by the Book of Job. It is evident, if the author of this drama had entertained a firm belief in a future state, and that in it the inequalities of the present moral government of the world would be corrected and God's ways vindicated, that it would have been made to occupy a very prominent place in the discussion; for it forms the one only solution of the problem which is the subject in debate. Yet,

with the exception of a single passage of doubtful interpretation, it never once enters into the argument. With Job's friends outward prosperity is the one sign of God's favour: adversity is a proof of His anger: and from this they consider the inference certain that a great sufferer must be a great sinner. Job, on the other hand, in the strongest manner affirms his innocence; but he is unable to give any solution of the facts, and even calls the Divine justice into question. Nor does the Divine Being who intervenes at the conclusion of the drama say one word about a future state in which the present inequalities of Providence will be corrected. He affirms, indeed, that Job's general position was right, and that those of his friends were wrong; but the only solution which he propounds of the question under debate is, that His providences constitute a mystery unfathomable by man.

This all but total absence in the Old Testament Scriptures of any reference to a future state as an encouragement to the holy or as a warning to sinners is a fact which requires no proof, for it is one which is palpable to every reader; nor will the few gleams of light which they may occasionally throw on the other world affect the general character of their teaching. The fact that it is never

used by either legislators, historians, psalmists, or prophets for the purpose of enforcing the practice of holiness or for deterring from sin seems only explicable on the assumption that the belief in it was not felt to rest on such grounds of certainty as to render it capable of being used as a moral and spiritual power such as would exert a beneficial influence on the masses of mankind. The Apocryphal books, however, prove that in the interval between the close of the prophetic period and the Advent a belief in a future state of some kind had taken deep root, and had become purified from some of the gloom with which the Underworld of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the ancient world is invested. Yet the mode in which it is referred to leads us to believe that it was rather a pious opinion than a firm rational conviction. To this, however, the belief of the Maccabee martyrs forms a striking exception. It is evident, however, that a faith like theirs was only the privilege of the few.

If we turn our attention to the arguments which have been adduced in more modern times for a belief in a future state, we shall find them to partake of a similar character, *i.e.*, that they only rest on grounds of probability, but convey no fulness of assurance. Of these arguments those adduced

by Butler may be taken as a fair sample. One thing, however, should be carefully noted, viz., that he does not adduce them as affording positive proof of a future state, but as rendering its existence sufficiently probable to bear the weight of his subsequent reasonings. Further, not a few of them are brought forward for the purpose of showing that if, on other grounds—for example, the testimony of an express revelation—we have reason for believing that a moral government of the universe exists, and that a future state is necessary for its perfect development, then there is nothing in the phenomena with which death is attended which necessarily involves our destruction as moral and responsible agents. This portion of his reasoning is adduced solely for the purpose of answering objections against its existence, supposing it to be otherwise capable of proof. His general position may be briefly stated thus: the evidence for a future state has the same general amount of probability as that on which prudent men act in common life; or, to put it at lowest, prudential considerations require that we should act on the assumption that there may be a future state in which a man's "works will follow him;" for it cannot be denied that the reasons which can be adduced in its favour render its existence so

far probable, that prudence requires us to act on the assumption of its reality, on precisely the same principles as we act in many of the contingencies of life. But the entire Butlerian argument is a very complicated one, which not only requires a considerable amount of intellectual power fully to grasp, but, when grasped, it constitutes a series of probabilities which require to be carefully balanced before we can arrive at a definite judgment as to their value. This being so, whatever influence it may exert on thoughtful minds, the moral power which it can exert on the masses can only be inconsiderable. To reach them an appeal must be made to something very different from a body of complicated probabilities or prudential considerations. Want of space, however, renders it impossible that I should examine these reasonings in detail. It will be sufficient to observe that they vary greatly in the degree of their conclusiveness.

There are, however, two arguments for a future state of a far more commanding force than any which have yet come under notice. Both of these depend for their validity on the assumption that a God exists who is not only the wise Creator of the universe, but also its righteous moral governor. The first may be briefly stated thus:—

If death terminates man's conscious existence, it

will be alike to the most prosperous sinner and to the most self-sacrificing saint after the termination of this earthly scene ; *i.e.*, both will sleep the sleep of unconsciousness, in which neither will be the better nor the worse for their works done here. A striking example will form the best illustration of the force of this argument for a future state of retribution. Of all the sinners of the first French Revolution, perhaps none was more detestable than Fouché. Yet, by his adroitness, he succeeded in evading every danger which engulfed his comrades in iniquity, and, after a prosperous life, he died quietly in his bed. The crimes which this man perpetrated were unutterable ; yet he filled office under the Directory, which he betrayed ; became the chief minister of police under Napoleon I., whom he betrayed likewise ; and finally succeeded in forcing himself as prime minister on Louis XVIII., after having voted for his brother's death, and after having had a hand in nearly every crime which had been perpetrated during that terrible period. On the other hand, no one holds a higher place in the noble army of sacrificers in the cause of humanity, with the single exception of his Master, than the Apostle Paul ; yet, after a life spent in toil and suffering, he perished by the axe of the executioner. Yet, if there is no hereafter,



and if the only reward of self-sacrifice and the only punishment of crime are those which happen in the present life, it would have been far better to have been Fouché than Paul. But this every one who believes that the universe is under the moral government of a righteous God will pronounce to be simply incredible. It follows, therefore, that there must be a future state, in which *the inequalities of the moral government of the present will be redressed.*

This argument is unquestionably a powerful one, and one which, to a believer in the existence of a righteous God who is the moral governor of the universe, places the belief in it on a firmer basis than all the metaphysical arguments united. It therefore strikes us as very remarkable that it never entered into the reasonings of the various philosophic schools who discussed this subject prior to the Advent. The reason, however, is obvious. They had no certain belief in the existence of a personal God who is the moral governor of the universe, the rewarder of holiness, and the punisher of sin. Nothing can be more certain than that the present moral government of the world is most imperfect if man's conscious existence terminates at death. It follows, therefore, if it is under the perfect moral government of a righteous God, there

must be a future state of existence beyond the grave, in which the imperfections of its present moral government will not only be redressed, but the whole will be shown to be holy, righteous, and good.

The second argument is derived from the mighty powers of which man is capable, the slowness of their growth, the shortness of the period during which they can be exercised, and the rapidity of their decay. This is true even when human life attains its normal length; but in very numerous cases, if man's existence is confined to this life alone, those powers are only developed to perish. The question, therefore, put by the Psalmist is capable of a very wide application, "Wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain?" Why the production of these mighty powers without providing any adequate sphere for their exercise? Why have they been bestowed without having been allowed to attain even to their full maturity? There is no possible answer to questions such as these if man's conscious existence is terminated at death. If there be no God, and man is the production of the unintelligent forces of Nature, then there is no purpose in his origination, and all such questions are irrelevant. But if there be a wise Creator of the universe (and a wise Creator must

have had a definite purpose in His work), then the only solution of these questions is, that there will be a future state in which man's powers will find an appropriate sphere of action. To this conclusion it is no answer to reply that God's ways are past finding out; for if these powers, which only attain their perfection after so long a period of preparation, perish without any adequate sphere being afforded for their employment, and even before they can be used, then their production is evidently purposeless, and in such a case the absence of purpose is so evident that even our finite intellects are capable of forming respecting it an adequate judgment.

It must be observed, however, that these two reasons only prove that man's personality will survive the stroke of death, but that they prove nothing respecting his absolute immortality. As we are utterly ignorant of the nature of spirit, although it may survive death, yet, for aught we know, it may be so constructed as to wear out after it has run its destined course, just as the body, even if free from disease, is constructed to wear out. There is also one further reason which affords a high probability that our personality may survive the dissolution of our bodily frame, for which we are indebted to modern science, which requires notice

here. Science has established the fact that our bodies are in a state of constant flux, and that not one particle of the matter which composed our bodies a few years ago forms a portion of our present bodies. But while this is the case, it forms one of our highest certainties that throughout all these changes we have continued the same conscious beings. Our personality, therefore, is unaffected by any amount of bodily change. This being so, there is no reason why it should not survive the complete dissolution of our bodies. But this, like the foregoing reasons, only affords a high probability that our personal being will survive the stroke of death, and does not prove our absolute immortality. For aught we know, there may be diseases, such as deadly forms of evil, which may destroy the substance of the soul, whatever it may be, just as there are diseases which destroy the body. Further, as we are certain that our conscious existence once had a beginning, we have no means of knowing that, when it has fulfilled the purpose for which it has been brought into existence, it may not have a termination. These are points on which reason is absolutely silent; and consequently light can only be thrown on them by a revelation. Reasons which may be adequate to prove that our conscious personality may survive

the dissolution of our bodies may be quite inadequate to prove that it will never have a termination. Our ignorance of what Spirit or Personality is renders all reasonings on such subjects alike futile.

The uncertainty of the evidence which reason furnishes for a future state of existence after death, and the additional uncertainty that man's works done here will follow him and exert an important influence on his condition in the unseen world, is, I think, one of the greatest mysteries in the present constitution of things. Considering its extreme importance in its bearing on human conduct, we might have naturally expected, as I have above observed, that the evidence of it would have been made to rest, not on a number of probabilities involving intricate reasonings and acts of judgment, but that it would have formed one of our primary certainties. Yet this, in common with numbers of our *a priori* ideas as to the mode in which the universe ought to have been constructed, fails to be realised in the universe of fact. Reason may give us strong grounds for believing that it is highly probable that we shall be called into judgment hereafter for our conduct here, yet it affords no absolute certainty that we shall ; yet of certainty on this point

we stand in urgent need. Conscience, it is true, says authoritatively, You ought to do this, and you ought not to do that, and hints at retribution as a consequence of disobedience ; but it makes no definite affirmation respecting a future state, in which the saint and the sinner will reap the consequences of their respective deeds. It hints, but does not affirm. The voice of reason being thus uncertain, such a certainty can only be attained by the assurance of a revelation. That assurance the Christian revelation professes to afford. In the words of St. Paul, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commandeth all men that they should everywhere repent ; inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

Assuming, therefore, that the evidence that Christianity is a revelation from God is satisfactory, the proof that we shall survive the stroke of death, and that our works done here will follow us in their consequences hereafter, rests no longer on a body of reasonings more or less probable, but it is now become a matter of absolute certainty,

resting on the direct testimony of God, who in this revelation has thus given men a solemn warning that a time is coming when it is His purpose to judge the world in righteousness, and to render to every man according to his works. Taking another view of the subject, the want of certainty in the evidence which reason furnishes for the existence of a future state, when we consider the importance of certainty on such a subject to man, renders it on *a priori* grounds in the highest degree probable that this certainty would be imparted to him by a revelation.

On the other hand, it is important to observe that, while the testimony of reason to the existence of a future state is of a more or less halting character, it has absolutely *nothing to say against it*. The usual objections have been sufficiently disposed of by Butler. One which has since grown into importance requires a brief notice. I allude to the affirmations made by a certain school of modern scientists, that thought is a mere function of the brain; or, in other words, no brain, no thought. If this position is true, it follows as a necessary consequence that man, as a conscious personality, perishes at death. What, then, are the scientific facts?

All that science has really established is, that mind and brain are, in the present constitution of things, most intimately correlated, and that every mental action involves a corresponding movement in the brain ; but this is a very different thing from proving that mind and brain are identical. Unless this can be established, it is impossible to prove that man, as a conscious agent, perishes at death. It is not only conceivable, but highly probable, that, in a state of things differing from the present, thought may be capable of being exerted under different conditions ; and it is absurd to affirm that in the universe no other condition of things can exist different from that which comes within our present experience. All that can be affirmed with certainty is that, as far as our present direct experience has extended, thought and brain are intimately correlated, and that the mind invariably uses the brain as its instrument. But the Christian revelation meets this difficulty, if difficulty there be, in its affirmation that man in the future state will not be a disembodied but an embodied spirit. So strongly is this set forth in the New Testament, that I question whether so many as ten allusions to a disembodied condition of the human spirit can be found therein ; whereas



the attainment of this condition was the universal aspiration of the philosophers of the ancient world, who were unanimous in viewing an embodied state of existence as an incumbrance. Witness the aspirations again and again expressed in the Platonic dialogues. Modern science, therefore, not only fails to prove that man, as a conscious being, cannot exist independently of his bodily organisation, but the truths which it has established are in complete harmony with the Christian doctrine of a bodily resurrection.

Further, we have the strongest possible grounds for believing that a universe exists which presents all the indications of having been the production of mind. Certain it is that its adaptations are so vast and complicated that no human mind can grasp them. Assuming, therefore, that it has been produced by mind (and this will be the assumption of ninety-nine hundreds of mankind, despite all the efforts of materialistic philosophers and scientists to the contrary), this affords proof of the existence of mind independent of all material organisation. But if the Infinite Mind thus exists, there can be no reason why He cannot produce finite minds capable of so existing likewise; or why He should not be able to preserve them in being after the

bodily organisation through which they once manifested these powers is dissolved, or provide them with a new one in which to enter immediately after the stroke of death. Objections to the Christian doctrine of immortality founded on the real discoveries of science there are none.

## ARTICLE II.

BY THE REV. W. GARRETT HORDER.

NO one who is at all conversant with the drift of thought in our time will doubt that the question which is the subject of this Symposium is opportune. It would be difficult to name any age in which men have asked with more of earnestness, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Indeed, in our day the question is being pondered by persons to whom in former times it would scarcely have occurred. Mr. Lewis Morris, to whom we owe some of the noblest verse of recent days, and who is evidently keenly alive to the thoughts which are moving around us, in a recent poem called "The New Creed," makes a young girl, when the subject of another life is mooted, to answer, "There is nowhere else;" and in words of exquisite tenderness and sympathy shows how terrible the loss to maidenhood to be thus robbed of the hope and inspiration which belong to a belief in an immortal life. Whilst Mr. F. W. H. Myers, the accomplished son of one of the profoundest thinkers on sacred subjects, and who has himself given us a noble

poem on "The Implicit Promise of Immortality," tells us how, "on an evening of rainy May, he once walked in the Fellows' Garden of Trinity with the late George Eliot, and, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men—the words *God*, *Immortality*, *Duty*—pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the *first*, how unbelievable the *second*, and yet how peremptory and absolute the *third*."

Nor would it be difficult to point to causes which, in our day, have awakened such doubt. Its genesis is patent to every thoughtful mind. Few will fail to trace it to that exclusive pursuit of physical science which has brought in its train such a marvellous enlargement of our knowledge of the universe, and such a mastery of its wondrous resources. These results have for the time fascinated men, and drawn their minds too exclusively in one direction. We may rest assured that it will not be long before a rebound will come and the balance be restored; and, finding that more things are in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in any physical philosophy, men will again rest in the assurance that "when the earthly house of their tabernacle is dissolved, they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

For the present, however, and until the balance is restored, there will be much mental distress, and "men's hearts will fail them for fear." It is, therefore, a clear duty to do what little may be done to point men, bound with earthly fetters, to those great spiritual facts which assure us that we are not "wholly brain," and that there are not only ties which bind us to earth, but other and even stronger ones that link us to the spiritual and eternal.

The grounds of our belief in the existence of a future life may be conveniently considered under two divisions—Natural and Revealed.

#### THE NATURAL GROUNDS.

I. *There is a wondrous unity of aspiration in the race at large after a future life.* It is scarcely too much to say that it is one of the links which bind the race together. In some form or other it is never absent where man is found. His attitude in relation thereto is truly described by the Poet Laureate in "The Two Voices," which depicts the conflict in the human mind as to this great matter—

"Here sits he, shaping wings to fly,  
His heart forebodes a mystery,  
He names the name—Eternity!"

It is true the conceptions of men as to the nature

of such future life differ greatly; but the tribe or people has yet to be discovered—if indeed any new peoples are yet to be discovered—which is without such a belief. It is not utterly lost even amid the lowest barbarism, nor is it quenched by the highest civilisation. It is stronger in some races than others, but, so far as I know, it is as universal as the belief in God. The Hindu has his doctrine of Metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, which of course contains within itself the idea of a life beyond the present one. The followers of Confucius regard the departed as capable of giving aid to the meritorious of their progeny, and also of inflicting vengeance on the fallen and unworthy. The American Indian lights fires on the grave, that the departed may not journey in the dark, and burns bow and arrow, that he may be equipped for the chase in the spirit-land of which he delights to talk. The Fijians believe that the state of a man after death will be identical in every way with that in which he died. The Maories address the departed as powerful familiar friends. The tombs of Egypt contain a multitude of things which were buried with the dead—even strings of written prayers—for use in the other world, whilst by embalming they sought to preserve the body for the use of the spirit in the unseen land. The Scandinavian looked for the

hall of Walhalla, in which he would partake, as on earth, of the conqueror's banquet. Of the Greeks, Dr. Döllinger says—and a more competent authority it would be difficult to find—"that man lived on somehow or other, were it only in the melancholy state of shadow existence, was anyhow the general idea ever since there was a Greek people." Individual Greek writers may point in another direction, but the race certainly anticipated another life. Among the Romans there was much of uncertainty, and even doubt, but even they were not without the belief, and their doubt may be accounted for. The Mohammedan heaven of sensuous delight for the believer and a never-ending hell for the unbeliever form prominent and powerful articles in its creed.

There are two apparent exceptions to this pervading belief; one of these may be found in Buddhism. Buddha is silent as to immortality, for it seems to be now admitted by the best authorities that his "Nirvana" is rather a deliverance from present evil—an escape from the bondage of the fleshly nature whilst man is on the earth—than an absorption after death in the one Divine existence. But the explanation of this is not far to seek. It may be found in two considerations: (*a.*) that Buddha was an ethical rather than a religious

teacher, and therefore concerned himself with the course of men on earth rather than with their future destiny; and (b.) that Buddhism was a sharp recoil from and reformation of a faith which had been degraded into a doctrine of transmigration of souls. Whilst at the same time it may be noted that Buddhism did not long continue without a faith in an immortal life, which is conspicuous in its later developments both in India and China. Even in Buddhism the deep craving of the human heart for continued existence at last asserted itself, and rebelled against the creed of its originator.

The second seeming exception is found in the earlier history of Israel. The silence of the books of Moses on this matter is well known, and presents a very curious problem which is not easily solved. One thing, however, is quite certain, that Moses, who was learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, must have been well acquainted with the doctrine, which may be said to have been the most prominent and most vividly believed in the whole range of the Egyptian creed. Mr. Rawlinson, indeed, affirms that "their religious ideas clustered rather about the tomb than the temple." That is the one point of certainty about the matter, and starting from that, may we not say that Moses, recoiling, as he must have done, from a worship so



alien from the pure monotheism of Israel, rejected and excluded from his teachings at the same time the very idea of immortality around which so much of the superstition of Egypt gathered? Be that as it may, one thing is beyond doubt—that, in spite of the fact that the doctrine of immortality found no place in his authoritative teaching, yet gleams of it soon began to appear in Israel, which grew brighter and brighter, until at last, in our Lord's age, it had become the accepted belief of the great bulk of the nation, the only dissenters therefrom being the small and sceptically disposed sect which bore the name of Sadducee. Whilst, if we come to our own day, we cannot help observing that the very men who formally reject the belief are yet compelled to put some shadowy idea of immortality in its place. Even the Positivists, who profess to clear man's horizon of all but ascertained facts, yet discourse in glowing terms of the immortality of the race—that the individual perishes but the race lives on. Men dare not offer to their fellows a *religion* without some glimpse beyond the limits of their mortal and individual lives. Philosophy may do without the idea of immortality, but religion never can for any length of time, nor for any number of men. Is it too much to affirm that what is believed in at all times, everywhere and

by all—what is therefore most human—has either been quickened by a Divine influence, or, what is substantially the same thing, is the true and natural outcome of our human nature, and so, in a different way, but not less truly, has a Divine origin ?

II. Hitherto we have looked at the intimations of Immortality which are written broadly upon the race at large. If it were possible for a being, without any consciousness of his own, to look out on humanity at large, he would be compelled to admit that it is a characteristic of men to be concerned about and to believe in some continuance of life beyond the grave. But stronger assurances come to men as they interrogate their *own* natures, or listen to the still small voice which is heard within their hearts; whilst, as a general rule, it may be said that the purer and more spiritual the nature becomes, the clearer grows the voice which tells of such an immortal life. It may be admitted that the voice does not *directly* assure us of an eternal life. It rather points to considerations or rouses feelings which make it quite impossible to believe that we shall cease to be. The assurance of immortality lies hid in many of our feelings about this present life, *e.g.*—

1. *This earthly scene never quite satisfies us.* It

has its delights. Life is worth the living. But yet, without being guilty either of ingratitude or pessimism, we may assert that it fails quite to satisfy the nature. Without anything like contempt for earth and its arrangements, even the most appreciative spirit may yet declare that it does not satisfy the deepest cravings of the heart. Continually we seem to be nearing the point at which complete satisfaction will be ours, but it ever eludes us. Indeed expectation, and not satisfaction, seems to be all that even the most favoured ever find on earth. The words of the wise preacher find an echo in the hearts of most—"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Is it possible to believe that it would be thus if this present life were all that man is destined to inherit? It certainly is not to those who have caught any vision of goodness or love in the great Original, both of the earth and man. If this life were all, then the lower animals, so far as we can judge of their feeling by their looks, are more favoured than man, who is set over them, for they *are* content. Many a man has looked almost with envy at cattle, with that look of contentment on their faces to which he is an utter stranger. In every realm but the human there seems to be correspondence between the sphere and the inhabitant, so that it is or may

be satisfied with its lot. Man is the one unsatisfied being of the universe! Is that to be so for ever? Is the human craving destined to utter disappointment? Surely such a feeling is rather a witness to the greatness of man's nature; whilst in that very greatness is the assurance that there is in reserve for him a sphere proportioned thereto, and in which he will pass upwards, slowly it may be, but surely, to the point of satisfaction. It would surely be impossible to believe in any wise government of the universe if the highest creature in it were for ever to be a stranger to the satisfaction for which he longs and seeks.

2. *There are times in our earthly life in which we not only crave for, but seem to be conscious of, that which is eternal.* Scripture gives us many examples of such a consciousness. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up.\* Paul was caught up into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words.† John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and saw the New Jerusalem.‡ Treat these, if you will, as purely human visions; but even then we are face to face with the fact that men upon the earth have been conscious of an order of life and being altogether higher than that around them. The very least that can be made of such

\* Isa. vi.

† 2 Cor. xii.

‡ Rev. i. 10.

is that men have had power to imagine, and have imagined, a realm higher than the eye could see or the hand could touch. Nor do such belong only to a dim and distant past. The minds of men still move in a like direction. The visions may differ in form, but still their eyes are strained and their hearts yearn for a realm higher than earth, and in many a high moment it seems to be a great reality. Even in our day "the power of the world to come" is not unfelt. Indeed, all the higher moods of the mind connect themselves with that which is eternal. Every ecstasy has within it more or less of an assurance of immortality. Divine worship, in its highest moments, awakens within the spirit of the worshipper the consciousness of that which is eternal, and quickens in him the assurance that in the vital elements of his nature he belongs thereto. But even in acts which are not distinctively religious a like consciousness sometimes rises within the spirit. It is not merely an ecclesiastical assurance. The Divine has many handmaids, many altars, many temples. Where no priest is found, where no prophet speaks, the soul, with wings like a dove, flies away from the troubled scenes of earth to a haven of rest. The strains of noble music, especially if they be heard in solitude, and the instruments from which they

proceed be hidden from sight, sometimes waken feelings in the heart which render us almost unconscious of our earthly surroundings, and connect us with a higher realm and more exalted beings.\* In memorable words Dr. Newman speaks of the strains of music "as the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound. Something are they besides themselves which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter, though mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the power of eliciting them." And the influence of the highest poetry is akin to that of the noblest music. The poets are seers—men of vision—and their words are full of echoes of the Eternal; their noblest lines are burdened with the consciousness of the enduring; when they are most powerful they awaken the assurance of "a land which is very far off." But strangest of all, perhaps, is the influence of even the earth herself, in her grander scenes and moods, in relation to another realm. We should have fancied that the earth would only have witnessed of herself, and held down men's thoughts thereto. But to many a man it is not thus. Many a one, as he has reached some mountain-top which revealed to his astonished sight a far-reaching and glorious scene,

\* Cf. "At a solemn music" (Milton).—*Newman's University Sermons.*

has, like Jacob, been compelled "to worship, leaning on the top of his staff," whilst the very light which has flooded the scene has told him of "a light that never was on sea or shore." Beneath the silent stars of night we sometimes feel that though our lot is cast on earth we belong to other and fairer realms, and that the work here, in which we are so often baffled and disappointed, is but as a training for higher service, which with larger powers we shall be called to undertake.

3. *There is within us a deep-seated recoil from the very thought of extinction.* Mr. W. E. Forster is reported to have said to Harriet Martineau, "I would rather be damned than annihilated." If we may judge of the sentiments of the race by its evident longing for another life, and by the way men fight against and seek to preserve themselves from being even forgotten, that declaration would find an echo in the vast majority of mankind—

"No life that breathes with human breath  
Has ever truly longed for death."

It is quite bitter enough to think of life ceasing on earth, even though we are assured that it has only gone over to an actually existing majority, but the thought would be maddening if we were assured that it had ceased to be. I cannot in any way reconcile the fact that man has power to

bring the life of his fellow-man to an end by the sword, by poison, or by any other means, with a belief in a righteous government of the world, if the earthly be an eternal end. It is quite horrible enough for man to be able to bring to a close the *earthly* life, but for him to be able to annihilate his fellow, to blot him out of existence, would be an almost maddening thought. Is a power like that given to the hand of passionate, vindictive, ignorant men? Are we to be compelled to believe that on the tricks of diplomacy, or the jealousy of monarchs, or the intrigues of statesmen, or the hot blood of professional soldiers, or the scheming of courtiers, should depend not only the *earthly* course of millions, but their very existence, or rather utter annihilation from out the whole universe of God? That is impossible of belief to any who have caught even the faintest glimpse of a God of righteousness. Such destruction of life on earth must be at least relieved by the thought of another world in which the cruelly broken thread of their existence may be taken up, continued, and wrought to greater completeness than on earth was possible.

The extinction of even the wicked is not an idea that adapts itself easily to the minds of men. Those who in our day profess to believe in it, and



seek to support their views out of the teaching of Scripture, have only been driven thereto by the inhuman teachings of the cruel theology in which they were nurtured, and some even of them have passed up to better thoughts both of the destiny of men and the purposes of God.

4. *The plan of human life cannot be justified if it be limited to this earthly scene.* There is an utter want of proportion between the preparation for and the duration of human life. It always takes twenty or thirty years to prepare for the work of life, whilst in some natures the maturity of power is not reached till forty or fifty years of the life have passed, so that on an average a half of the lifetime is spent in preparation for its work; and in the highest realms the powers do not reach their full development very long before they begin to yield to the oncoming of the weakness of age. We toil slowly up the mountain-side, we spend a brief season on the summit, and then we are obliged to begin the descent. A sufficient *raison d'être* for life cannot be found in the visible realm, even under the most favourable circumstances, when the life is longest, for even then the preparation is out of all proportion to the time prepared for, and in which the powers are exercised at their best. If it be thus even in those cases where

old age is reached, what can be said of lives which come to an earthly end just as the preparation is finished?

Is it possible that the very words of men live on, but that they, from whose nature they sprang, have ceased to be; that their thoughts are preserved in the material form of books, but that their more spiritual source in mind and heart has perished out of the universe of God; that the lower and less valuable survives, while the higher and more precious is lost? Surely, if we saw things as they are, we should be convinced that thought and feeling are more enduring than the forms in which they find expression!

It would be possible to point to a multitude of men of the very highest type who have passed away just as their powers reached maturity. We speak of such as "called away." If by that be meant the closing of the life for ever, then there is assuredly waste of that which is most precious; for what remains is only the work which has been done, or the influence left upon other minds and hearts; or if there be children, there is what men now call the transmitted tendency in them; but if the powers, trained through so many years—it may be with much of discipline and suffering—be lost for ever, then there is sad waste of

precious things. Can this be in the universe of a God who gathers up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost? It is surely impossible that He can be careful of the material and careless about that spiritual nature which is infinitely more precious.

But if, on the other hand, by "called away" we mean to other service, larger, grander, nobler, than that of earth, then there is no waste, but only the nicest economy of power. This justifies the long preparation, the difficulty of mental and spiritual culture, the varied discipline of earth. This sets the whole matter in a new and brighter light. Then it is felt that thirty, or forty, or fifty, or even a hundred years of life is not too long a preparation-time for a service which shall know no end, and which may employ the greatest energies of the most prepared souls.

As Lowell nobly says in his *Elegy on the death of Channing*—

"Thou art not idle : in thy higher sphere  
Thy spirit bends itself to loving tasks,  
And strength, to perfect what it dreamed of here,  
Is all the crown and glory that it asks."

5. *The development which is observable in the noblest lives, and which continues to the end, is in harmony with such assurance of a future life. All have seen how noble natures grow more matured,*

more mellowed, more beautiful, as the life reaches on to its earthly close. Earth has no lovelier sight than that of a beautiful old age—yes, a *beautiful* old age; for the beauty of age is of a richer, deeper, more satisfying kind than that of youth. Youth may have the advantage in formal, material beauty, but age has the advantage in beauty of meaning and expression.

Look at any well-known face, as it is made known to us in pictures taken at various periods of the life, and this will be noticeable: that whilst in youth the physical beauty was greatest, yet as the years increased there came to the face more of depth, and meaning, and glory. “That was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural, and afterwards that which was spiritual.” The face grows to maturity: it is matured for what? Some would say, to be “cast as rubbish to the void;” to be the prey of death, to be overcome of corruption. Is this conceivable in the world of a wise, and holy, and loving God? No, rather is it matured—“meetened for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Unclothed it may be, and so unclothed as to look as if destroyed, but clothed upon with its house which is from heaven. And surely some glimpse of all this is found when we see, as sometimes we do, in the very last hour

of the life, all the faculties and powers of the being in fullest exercise; the man at his very best—ripest in experience, truest in judgment, most full of God. Is it possible to believe that all is brought to an end by the mere failure of a part of the mechanism of the body—the bursting of a tiny blood-vessel, or the yielding of the substance of heart or lungs? Is it possible to believe that because the frail tent in which the man dwelt is taken down that *he* ceases to be? It cannot be! There rather steals over our spirits the assurance that the plant lost to earth will “bloom to profit elsewhere;” that the life will seek and find, as the “earthly tabernacle is dissolved, a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

“No ! no ! we cannot die ;  
In death's unrobing-room we strip from round us  
The garments of mortality and earth ;  
And breaking from the embryo state that bound us,  
Our day of dying is our day of birth.”

6. *Nor is it surely too much to affirm that every high ideal which is not reached on earth points to an immortal life, which may afford time and scope for its realisation.* Every noble life has its unattained ideal—a goal which it sees afar off, to which it is ever pressing, and in many a case happily, it may be said, nearing, but which is never actually

reached on earth. Theodore Parker, on his death-bed, said to Frances Power Cobbe, "I am not afraid to die; but I wish I might carry on my work. I have only half used the powers God gave me." Indeed, if the ideal of one season of the life be actually reached, a still higher one rises before the mind; the actual point which once formed the horizon of life's ocean may be touched; but when it is touched, and even before it is touched, a wider horizon has opened before the soul. Emmanuel Kant argued from the existence of a moral law unrealised and unrealisable here the necessity of some after-life. From no point of view is the grandeur of human life seen more impressively. These unrealised ideals of earth are surely no mere moral will-o'-the-wisps, which will ever evade the grasp of those who seek them. They must represent possibilities which will some day be realised!

7. *There are aspects, too, in which our very yearning for the continued life of those we love—rising, as it often does, to the most intense earnestness—seems to contain an intimation of Immortality; for if it rested with us, if the power to maintain them in a life beyond the grave were ours, we should assuredly exercise it; our love would compel us—it might safely be trusted to do so. Shall we trust ourselves, and not the Eternal*

One, from whom all that is noblest and purest in our nature comes? We, too, could think of loved ones to whom we could trust our own fate to the uttermost, certain that, if the power were theirs, they would gratify every noble desire for the future that is in our heart. Shall we trust thus quietly in "men whose breath is in their nostrils," and be fearful about the "living God, who giveth unto all men liberally, and upbraideth not?" Every great yearning for the eternal life of those we love, as well as every confidence that if our fate were in loving human hands all would be well, involves the certainty that the great heart of God will outsoar, in the eternal order which He has established, our very highest desires.

### III. Suggestions in the natural world.

*Nature* seems now to be the last quarter in which men look for either the suggestion or confirmation of a faith in an immortal life. It must be confessed that natural science has of late rather wakened doubts concerning it. Doubtless there are ways of regarding Nature which tend rather to enchain us within her realm than to point us a way to a higher and more spiritual one. But it may be affirmed, and the affirmation supported by actual examples, that the man who takes just one little department

of Nature, and with scalpel and microscope works therein year after year, scarcely lifting his eye or turning his thought therefrom, though he may be useful in the enlargement of what may be called the technical knowledge of Nature, will probably grow dry and hard and sceptical; but the man who opens his whole being to the broad influence of Nature will often hear whisperings of more than earthly voices and catch glimpses of more than earthly truths. The man who can "creep and botanise upon a mother's grave," or "decompose a wife's tears," is sure to grow into deeper doubt of aught beyond the earthly life; but the man who "talks with Nature as a familiar friend" will find himself led up, step by step, to realms beyond. The man who is bent upon analysing the pigments of a picture will miss the whole meaning of the artist; and so the man who will be only a geologist, or an anatomist, or botanist, will fail to see the broad lesson which is written upon Nature's face. It is in Nature's broadest scenes that suggestions and confirmations of a belief in immortality are to be found. In most ages, and by many minds, these have assuredly been found.

1. *Nature warns us not to judge by appearances.* In her domain we find that what looks like death is not so in reality. To a multitude of her



possessions winter seems to bring death. Every sign of life passes from them. It is not at all unlikely—it is even highly probable—that the man who first saw, and for the first time, a real autumn and winter, regarded it as an oncoming of death in great realms of Nature. As he beheld, on every side, decay—the leaves falling from the trees, the flowers withering on their stalks, the very stalks looking dry and hard—he would probably fancy that the beauty and life of the world were departing for ever. But what a change would be wrought in his thought as the spring came on! With what amazement would he see the hard, dry, dead looking bark of the trees pierced, first of all, by tiny points of buds, and gradually covering themselves with the tender green of the spring, the earth clothing herself with new verdure, and coming forth as a bride adorned for the bridegroom. We mortals have only seen the winter of death; we have not seen, as yet, the Spring-time of Immortality. We may admit that death looks like an end, and, indeed, it is an end of the mortal; but it would be indeed foolish, in a world where appearances are so illusory, to judge by them. Illustrations of this offer themselves in every realm, *e.g.*, the world *looks* like a huge plain broken by mountain and valley, by land and water. No one would

ever fancy it was a globe. It seems, too, to be at rest; no sensation of motion is ever felt by the dwellers on it. It looks like an utter delusion to believe that at an incredible speed it is moving around the sun. Earth is full of appearances which are not in harmony with reality. Shall we judge of death by appearances which would deceive us so utterly in other regions? As yet we have no instrument which, like the telescope, may correct the influence of appearances. It may, indeed, be affirmed that Science can say nothing either for or against immortality. It can tell us how the body at death passes into the realm of corruption, and goes to build up other structures. It is silent as to the course of that mysterious personality which was the informing spirit of the body. Amid the silence of Science, Nature, at least, whispers into our ear and warns us, by many a token, not to judge by appearances, but to judge a righteous judgment.

2. *Nature reminds us that seeming death is but the way to a fuller life.* In her realm, life with its fragrance and beauty is often hidden in that which looks utterly lifeless. Who would believe that in seeds which drop away from dying stalks, and which look as dead as they, there lies the germ of the flowers of springs and summers yet to come?

Who would believe that in the withered-looking orchid there are held in a kind of captivity the glorious blooms, with all their delicate colours and pencilling, which at the appointed time will ravish many an admiring eye? Indeed, there are plants, like the clematis, whose stalks look so dead that any one unacquainted with their habit would cut them down and commit them to the flames, but even out of the apparently dead stalk there will presently spring the tiny buds which will show that life was only closely prisoned and had not departed. So Nature bids us not be afraid of the apparently withering, and even destroying, hand of death. It must be admitted that it does not offer us any proof of another life, but, what is almost as good, it is full of suggestions which go to support our faith therein. So that the great Master, Christ, did not scruple to say, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." We may yet find that the truest and largest increase of our life will spring out of what seems its greatest loss. Giving up to decay the natural body, we shall yet find a spiritual body more adequate to the fullest aspirations and powers of the spirit than the frail body of earth could ever be.

## THE REVEALED GROUNDS.

These are found in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they render stable those which would otherwise be felt to be uncertain and yielding, especially in times of trial and sorrow, and in the actual presence of death. It must be admitted, as, indeed, it already has been in our brief review of the beliefs of the race in an immortal life, that the idea of immortality did not originate with Jesus Christ. He rather confirmed than originated the belief. He has changed what was only a yearning, a hope, a surmise, into a deep and settled assurance. As St. Paul tells us, Christ brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel—that is, He has brought it from the realm of shadow into the revealing light of day. He has accomplished this—

1. *By His revelation of God as a God of the living.* Never did He throw more light on the words of the Old Testament than when He declared that the very name by which God was known—the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob—implied the continued existence of the patriarchs, since He could not be the God of men who had ceased to be. A God of the dead was to Jesus Christ an utterly absurd idea. His whole nature was possessed with the vision of One unto whom all live.

Altogether apart from His direct testimony to immortality, Christ has deepened the assurance of it by His lofty revelation of the Heavenly Father, for He saw in the very nature of Him from whom He came (and whom He knew as none beside did) the certainty of an eternal life for those who had been fashioned in His image and were inheritors of His nature. Look out upon the human race and see its yearning for immortality, and say, if in any deep and real sense it belongs to God, whether it is possible to believe that such a yearning is doomed to utter and everlasting disappointment. It is easy enough to think of a mere originator of the universe limiting the creatures in it to an earthly existence, even though they may be longing for an eternal one, but it is impossible to think of a Father of men, such as Christ has made known to us, utterly disregarding their yearning for an immortal life. If God be only the great mechanic or chemist, or physical force of the universe, we can conceive of men being left in the gripe of mere material forces; but if there be love anywhere in the nature of God, it must concern itself for longings which have sprung of necessity out of the very nature which He has given to them. Wherever Christ's revelation of the Father is accepted, in the very heart of it is found the assurance of immortality. It is as

vital a part of it as is the sun to the physical universe. He would be a Father only in name if He did not respond to hopes which have sprung up in the soul of humanity from germs which have either dropped from His heaven or grown of necessity out of the natures which He has both designed and fashioned. A parent who has the power to meet the truest and deepest longings of his child and fails to do it, fails in his parental duty. Men, who cannot but hope for an immortal life, might well say if it were denied to them, "Why hast Thou made us thus?" In the light of Christ's revelation of the Father we have the assurance that no such question can ever rightly rise from human lips. More, not less, than we desire is offered us by Him of whom Christ declares, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"

2. *By His revelation of the capacity of humanity for an immortal life.* Christ professed to sustain a twofold relationship—on the one side to God, on the other to men. He is the peerless representative of both—of God as the God of the living, who cannot permit death to be finally triumphant over men; of man as showing that his

nature in its purest form is capable and worthy of immortality. Christ is the ideal man. In Him we see what humanity may be, and as we thus see it, we cannot but feel that it is worthy of continued and even unending life. Christ has thus put honour on humanity by showing what it may become. In the light of Jesus Christ the feeling steals over us that humanity has been fashioned on a scale worthy of endurance. When once the idea takes possession of us that Jesus Christ is worthy of living on—when the thought of His passing out of existence becomes utterly horrible and unbelievable to us, then, since He is a true Son of Man—bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh—the first-fruits of the great harvest of humanity, we are assured that because “He lives we shall live also,” and that under His gracious influence we shall be slowly but surely made worthy of eternal life.

3. *Christ kindles in men ideas and feelings which contain the assurance of immortality.* In His company men gradually come to feel that the spiritual is the only reality in life. The kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost throws into the shade that which is only of meat and drink. And so there grows up within the heart the assurance that such a spiritual

kingdom set up within men *must* have at last an appropriate and enduring home.

“Heaven-born, the soul a heavenward course must hold.”\*

A spiritual kingdom must surely be an immortal one, for it is beyond the power of death. No proof can be offered that death has ever been able to touch, much less destroy, aught that is spiritual. Indeed there are a multitude of things which seem to suggest that the spiritual defies death and its power. Christ Himself was hurried to the Cross and put to death thereon by cruel hands, but was the spiritual influence of Christ crucified at Calvary or buried in the rock-hewn sepulchre to have no resurrection? Nothing is more certain in the whole history of the world than this: that, seed-like, it fell into the ground to have a glorious resurrection and growth among the nations. What is true of Jesus Christ is true in smaller measure of thousands of His followers. The very permanence of spiritual thought and feeling, their immunity from death, their pervasive influence, all seem to point to a realm in which the natures of those in whom they were found will have an abiding life. A spiritual kingdom on earth, whose members are ever dropping into the arms of death,

\* Michael Angelo.



is no mean witness for the existence of a realm suited to their natures, and giving fuller opportunities for the use of their trained and purified powers.

4. *Christ's express declarations of an immortal life.* These are familiar to every reader of the Gospels. They stand out in clearest outline as we stand in the shadow of death. They are almost the only words we can bear in the moment of our bereavement. It is not necessary to quote or discuss them. But this may be said—the express words of Christ concerning an eternal life by no means exhaust His teaching concerning it, for it is the presupposition upon which His whole ministry was conducted. It was almost the universal belief of His age. It lies like a luminous background behind many of His pictures. He is ever speaking of quickening in men a life which is of such a nature that it must be eternal, not only as to its intensity, but its duration. And, therefore, in times when faith grows weak, it is well to resort to the fellowship, and open our hearts to Him who is the resurrection and the life.

5. *Christ's own resurrection from the dead.* It would be impossible here to present any arguments in its support. It must suffice to say that His words prepare for, and at last grow to, a kind of objectivity as He passes out of the realm of death, and holds

converse as of old with His disciples and friends, not departing at once from their sight and fellowship, but through those mysterious forty days, in strange and unlooked-for ways, being made known to them, and both instructing and comforting their souls. Christ's own resurrection is a kind of incarnation of the truth concerning an eternal life which He had formerly proclaimed. Thus it became visible to sight, as before it could only be received by the ear. The sight of the risen Christ has, perhaps even more than His words, tended to strengthen the heart to believe in the reality and individuality of the life of the world to come.

Thus in every realm there seem to be hands which point and voices that bear witness to an immortal life. The full force of such intimations is seen only when they are brought together. Any one of them may not be strong enough to hold the spirit—it may only be as a tiny thread to keep the vessel to its anchorage, and may yield when the waves begin to rise and the winds to blow; but when all are brought together, they are surely sufficient to hold the spirit even in the wildest storm.

Whence does the pressure of difficulty come? Chiefly, if not entirely, from the bodily changes which accompany death, and which render all inter-

course with the dead, here and now, impossible. The conflict lies between bodily appearances and moral and spiritual considerations. Can there be any doubt as to which should yield? Is there one, even in this age of enthusiasm for physical research, who would say that material appearances are to put aside the well-ascertained witness of the moral and spiritual nature of man? Possibly there may be a few who would say they should, but their view is clearly so one-sided that it need not greatly affect us. To most men the two witnesses come—the two voices are heard. We look at death, and from its bodily aspect there comes a voice which cries, “It is all over.” We listen for the witness of the spiritual nature within us, and we hear, “Absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”

Surely we should not yield our assent to the voice of our lower nature, and which naturally points to that which is mortal in it, concerning which it may really utter the truth; but to the voice which comes from the more spiritual part of our being, and concerning which it probably utters the truth when it assures us that mortality *must* be swallowed up of life.

## ARTICLE III.

BY THE REV. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

ONLY one thing seems to be clear concerning the belief in the immortality of man—that no two men appear to agree as to the origin of it. And yet it is everywhere, and belongs to every age; and, like the Logos of God, it lighteth every man coming into the world. Like that Logos, too, it does not light every man in the same way and to the same extent; but the light is there, and we can believe—

“That in even savage bosoms  
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,  
For the good they comprehend not;  
That the feeble hands and helpless,  
Groping blindly in the darkness,  
Touch God’s right hand in that darkness,  
And are lifted up and strengthened.”

Mr. Row, in his endeavour to point out the assured foundation of this belief in immortality, strongly inclines to what he calls “the Christian theory,” “that the belief in a future state was derived from a revelation made to primeval man by his Creator; and that from this source it has

been handed down by traditions, which, in the course of transmission, have passed through various stages of corruption." The formidable difficulty here is, that primeval man, in the Biblical sense, is more and more becoming mythical. The early men did not begin as listeners at the door of heaven, and their birthplace was not a blissful Eden. Indeed, it is very doubtful whether man originated in one place only. But be that as it may, it is almost too late in the day to talk about primeval man as the recipient of a message from the angelic spheres. He began at the other end; and Eden, and the angels, and "the secret of the Lord," are all before him. He is not a fallen, but a rising creature.

Will that take anything away, then, from the foundation of our belief in immortality? On the contrary. This strange hunger of the heart, clinging to life; this inner self, dreaming for ever the old sweet dream of life persistent beyond the grave, only proves that we are passing on to some better thing; it is a kind of prophecy of glorious stages yet to come; it is not a sigh for something lost, but an outreaching for something to be won. Man, as a pilgrim on the march upward, is a more glorious and hopeful object than man considered as a creature who is trying to scramble his way back to something he seems to have lost for ever.

Mr. Row endeavours to reduce non-Christian belief in immortality to the faintest possible haze of hope. He denies that it is an intuition or an instinct. He suggests that from one point of view we might very well have imagined that the Creator would not have left man in the smallest doubt on this subject, "but that He would have made his belief in a future state of retribution one of his primary certainties." Yet, he says, "this is precisely what God has not done." In the ancient world, he says, "the evidence on which the belief in a future state rested was comparatively weak." Nor, in his judgment, are our modern arguments much more convincing.

Curiously enough, Mr. Row cites the Old Testament as an instance of "the inability of reason alone to place the belief in a future state on a sure foundation." He says that the "all but total absence in the Old Testament Scriptures of any reference to a future state as an encouragement to the holy or as a warning to sinners . . . seems only explicable on the assumption that the belief in it was not felt to rest on such grounds of certainty as to render it capable of being used as a moral and spiritual power such as would exert a beneficial influence on the masses of mankind." He even says that Moses (who is assumed to be

the writer of the Pentateuch), though "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and consequently well informed on the subject of a future state, "must have deliberately rejected its teachings respecting it from a place in his legislation." This is an important admission in discussing the present question as to our "foundations;" but it will be very confusing to those who have been used to believe that the Old Testament is a part of "the Word of God," given as a revelation to man because of this very "inability of the reason" to find out for itself the truth concerning the unseen things. If, as he says, "nothing affords a stronger proof of the inability of reason alone to place the belief in a future state on a surer foundation than the position which it occupies in the Scriptures of the Old Testament," what becomes of the "revelation made to primeval man?" What, indeed, some may ask, becomes of the "revelation" of the New Testament, when only a monument of "the inability of reason" is found in the Old?

Mr. Row, in virtually giving up the Old Testament, both as a revelation from God and as a foundation of belief in immortality, parts from us with the bare intimation that "Christianity is a revelation from God;" and "assuming" (to use his own word) that Christianity is such a revelation from

God, he thinks "the proof that we shall survive the stroke of death . . . is now become a matter of absolute certainty, resting on the direct testimony of God." But is there no "testimony of God" in Nature and human nature? Has the Heavenly Father spoken to His child only in one way, and that way only a supernatural one, and once for all? Is not the "hope" that "springs eternal in the human breast" a "testimony of God?" When Socrates drank the poison and said, "I pray to the gods that my journey hence may be prosperous," had he no "testimony of God" in his heroic soul? And when the lonely mother half breaks her heart over the little empty cradle, yet presently gives her angel to God with a gentle trust, is there no "testimony" from the Father there? We surely risk too much on one cast when we disparage all other voices, and say that we become sure of immortality only as we believe that in Christianity God once for all made an announcement on the subject to the world.

In support of his contention that a revelation has been given, Mr. Row says that when we take into account "the want of certainty in the evidence which reason furnishes for the existence of a future state," and consider the importance to man of certainty on such a subject, it is "in the highest



degree probable that this certainty would be imparted to him by a revelation." But that will hardly bear consideration. He had already said, as we have seen, that from one point of view, and seeing how important to man was a knowledge of a future state, it might have been taken for granted that God "would have made his belief in a future state of retribution one of his primary certainties." But this is precisely what He has not done. How, then, can we at all consider that this failure to make the knowledge of immortality one of man's "primary certainties" (as, say, a vivid intuition or instinct) is made up for by a "revelation," which cannot but be partial in its operation? Mr. Row says that when we think how necessary a knowledge of a future state is, and how unable reason is to really help us, a revelation might well be expected. But what is the fact? This very revelation, after a lapse of 1800 years, is only just finding its way to the human race, the majority of whom know nothing about it. And even where it has long been known, thousands upon thousands, and these not the worst or least thoughtful of mankind, fail to recognise it as a revelation. What we wanted was certainty, says Mr. Row; and what was given to make us certain was the Christian revelation. But *has* it given certainty? Has it

even given certainty to Christendom? If those two great witnesses for God, Nature and human nature, are powerless to supply a foundation for belief in a future life, and if even the Old Testament, in addition, leaves us still in the dark, we are hazarding a tremendous stake in risking our faith upon the bare chance of a Christian revelation being the sole guide to a full assurance. And yet it may still be true, in a sense most beautiful and most inspiring, that life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel when grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

One other point may here be usefully noted. In denying that the intimation of immortality found in the mind is an intuition or an instinct, Mr. Row says that if it was an intuition or an instinct, "each of us would be conscious of possessing it." Is that so? Surely there are many human intuitions or instincts that find but feeble expression in some natures. Many of our most sacred human instincts are latent or perverted, or take grotesque forms at certain stages of human development. Man is a gregarious animal, and the social instinct is one of his special characteristics; but thousands of people are misanthropic and hate society; and we may suppose that the founding of human society began in the huddling together of half-wild creatures for

support and shelter and warmth. The intimation of immortality in the mind and spirit of man may be the profoundest of all intuitions, the most ineradicable of all instincts, but it may require hundreds of ages for its development; and many things suggest that this is indeed so. It is certainly a very singular fact that nothing seems to persist so universally as this very belief which Mr. Row says is not strong enough to be an intuition or an instinct; and yet it lives, and outlasts all kinds of vehicles that seemed to contain it. Like some river of water of life flowing ceaselessly through the universal heart of humanity, it seems to say—

“Men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.”

It has been associated with superstitions and terrors and degradations and miseries sufficient to kill anything, but it lives on, renewing its youth, rising up from the ashes of dead fires, an angel-voice that sings on, above all the din of human passion, folly, and fear. What is it if it is not the testimony of the Father speaking in the heart of the child, the whisper of Heaven claiming for its own this thing of earth?

One of the most remarkable things is, that when the evidence of “the Christian revelation” is offered, that which is most relied upon is the resurrection

of Jesus ; and what is nearly always meant by His resurrection is the resurrection of the body. But this is every year losing its efficacy as a ground of belief, and for two reasons : first, because we cannot help feeling more and more that the exceptional resurrection of a body 1800 years ago, so far from suggesting any hope of immortality, rather suggests the reverse ; for we know that our dead do not rise ; and multitudes, whose number is ever increasing, add—And we think they never will ; but, second, because we are now coming to a clearer conception of spirit-life, apart altogether from the life or animation of the physical body. The long-cherished belief in the resurrection of the physical body held its own mainly because the believers of a former day found it difficult to conceive of life apart from a material body or something like it ; and so, forgetting how many dear saints of God had been burnt to ashes, or even devoured by wild beasts, they talked of the “sleep in the grave” and “the resurrection of the body at the last day.” All that is slowly disappearing, and disappearing not because faith is dying, but because “the darkness is past and the true light now shineth.”

And yet, though that “true light” of insight into spirit-life is growing brighter, singular instances are never wanting that much remains to

be done. What, for instance, are we to think of the latest utterances of one of the very freest spirits in the Free Church of Scotland, Dr. Marcus Dods, who, speaking to his brother ministers, identified the resurrection of Christ with the resurrection of His body, and said, "If His body rotted away in the grim silence of death, then it would appear that material laws were supreme, that Nature was God, and that beyond the limits so imposed they had simply no outlook at all." This is almost appalling in its ignoring of the spirit-self. What if Jesus was able to show himself, His true spirit-self, to His disciples? Why cling so to the body? If there is an immortal spirit, then there is no such thing as death. Death, in that case, is simply resolved into separation between the physical and the spiritual, between the body and the spirit, or, shall we not rather say, between the physical body and the spiritual body?

But, indeed, is not this the very thing that Paul taught? He said plainly, "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." He recognised a distinction between the outer and the inner self when he said, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." He recognised that distinction again when he said that "while we are at home in the body we are absent

from the Lord ;” and when he professed himself willing to reverse that, and to be “ absent from the body ” that he might be “ at home with the Lord.” How plain it is that with him the resurrection was not the resurrection *of* the body, but resurrection *out of* the body ! All is orderly, natural, progressive in the great transition. The present senses are limited to the little sphere which now bounds our being, but the liberation of the spiritual senses will at once put us in communication with the spirit-world. The body hides more than it reveals. It is, as it were, the tabernacle, the veil over the true spirit-self,—what Shakespeare wonderfully calls the “ muddy vesture of decay ” that doth “ grossly close ” us in. Resurrection out of that is promotion, not loss ; and, in the light of that glorious thought, it is like groping in a dungeon to talk of “ no outlook at all ” if the body of Jesus “ rotted away in the grim silence of death.” The resurrection day is no postponed event. There will be no dramatic “ general assize,” no grotesque reconstructing of dead, dissolved, devoured, or scattered bodies ; only the natural gliding, one by one, of liberated souls behind the veil. A spirit-man is a real man ; and if we need some natural or scientific conception of such a being, we have only to think of an organism composed of substance as much more subtile

than the electric fluid as that which we call thought is more subtile than it—an organism, in fact, that shall be as exquisite as mind or thought itself; and there would be a man as superior to the earth-clogged man as the heavens are higher than the earth. Such a man would be at home in the spirit-sphere, in the vivid inner world of causes; and as a harmony, both in relation to himself and his environment, he might easily be regarded as having in himself the conditions of ceaseless persistence; in other words, of immortality.

What we really gain from Jesus is in this direction, and not in any bewildering resurrection of His physical body. We cannot help feeling that He lived in two worlds. He never felt Himself really alone. He did not so much talk of heaven as live in it; and when He referred to His Father, it was as one who almost heard His voice and saw His face. His was not an argument, but an insight; not a speculation, but an inspiration; not a hope, but a recognition. To the men who loved Him He said—"You ought to rejoice because I am going away. I go to prepare a place for you: and I will come again, and receive you unto myself." To the poor sorrowful sinner who got a glimpse of his brotherly love and heavenly strength, and leaned towards Him for comfort, He said—

“To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” If we can enter into the spirit of all this, and realise its truth for all God’s children, little enough shall we care to talk about the resurrection of poor disused bones !

Paul, as we have seen, fully entered into the spirit of this new faith or insight. Everywhere he saw incompleteness ; everywhere he heard an undertone of sadness, the sigh of longing : and these made him, not miserable, but hopeful ; and led him to look for an explanation to that heaven-birth, that glorious redemption, which he believed the whole creation would share with redeemed humanity. And we all, he says, are waiting for our adoption, and the redemption or emancipation of the body—the real body, which shall be delivered from “the body of this death.” And this longing is a kind of “first-fruits of the spirit”—the spirit becoming conscious of and asserting itself, sighing for freedom, and desiring “to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.” What room is there in all that for a resurrection of the physical, and for the obscuration of faith and hope if the material body of Jesus never really came forth from the grave and ascended into heaven ?

From these thoughts may now be gathered a direct answer to the question before us : “What



are the foundations of the belief in the immortality of man?" One of the first of these is certainly that indicated by Mr. Row, "that a God exists who is not only the wise Creator of the universe, but also its righteous moral governor;" and yet many of us would be very loth to draw from that Mr. Row's conclusion that, "if there is no hereafter, and if the only reward of self-sacrifice and the only punishment of crime are those which happen in the present life, it would have been far better to have been Fouché than Paul." Now "of all the sinners of the First Revolution," says Mr. Row, "perhaps none was more detestable than Fouché." His was a life of treachery, meanness, and pitilessness. Would it be better, then, even though there were no future life, to be Fouché than Paul, just because Fouché died in his bed and Paul came to the scaffold? Any belief in a future life or future retribution which had for its foundation any possible preference for the life of a Fouché *under any circumstances* would surely be a very doubtful kind of faith. But it is a very different thing to base such a faith on the moral trust to be reposed in One whom we regard as Creator, and specially as the Creator of those emotions, confidences, affections, hopes, and longings that lie at the heart of all the really great

things of life. God, regarded not so much as the awarder of penalties and delights, but as the "faithful Creator" who would not betray the trust of those who believed in Him and loved Him; God, as holding communion with the aspiring soul; God, as the instigator of hope, must ever be for those who in any sense believe in Him a foundation of belief in immortality.

Or, if we ponder the subject not from the side of faith in God, but only from the side of faith in man, a suggestion of considerable value may be found in the thought that man is evidently a being adapted for progress, and that, therefore, anything which uplifts, develops, explains, and enlarges life is likely to be true. Besides, we are manifestly living in a universe of boundless possibilities; and it may reasonably be inferred that, not the view of life which dwarfs and impoverishes, but the view which expands and enriches, is always most likely to be true. We talk of life; but how little we know about it! Everything seems to tend onward and upward; and the "stream of tendency" is bearing man on, for the most part against his will, or independently of it, to issues that broaden and deepen in mystery every generation. Emerson, in one of his sunny-hearted letters to Carlyle, well said—"What have we to do with old age? Our

existence looks to me, more than ever, initial. We have come to see the ground, and look up materials and tools." What a noble thought! and how likely to be true! But it is only what Paul intended to indicate when he said that the things which are seen are temporal, while the things which are not seen are eternal. Contrast that luminous ray of spiritual life from the brain and heart of such a man as Emerson with one of the latest songs of unbelief, which runs in this wise—

"There is one steady star, and, dim from afar,  
Comes the solace that lies in its gleam :  
There's the coffin nail's rust, the brain in white dust,  
And the sleeping that knows no dream."

What a "solace," and what an explanation of human life, with all its eager unrest, its heart-hunger, its mysterious trust, its sleepless longing for life beyond the seeming catastrophe of the grave! Or take that other moan from one of these modern songs of unbelief—the cry of an Agnostic who soon learnt to be a Pessimist—

"To thy dark chamber, Mother Earth, I come :  
Prepare my dreamless bed for my last home ;  
Shut down the marble door,  
And leave me ; let me sleep ;  
But deep, deep ;  
Never to waken more."

Who that looked only for this could do anything but drag on his desolate way, making what he

could of the miserable inevitable, with only the grave for a last home, and suicide the shortest way to it? Surely a trust, a hope, a faith, which lifts man out of all that, and floods all life with the glory, the hopefulness, the creative beauty and energy, of the confidence that he is only passing on to fuller life—which sets a man's life to music, and gives the fullest and grandest explanation of everything in life—is, at least, likely to be true.

But it may be said that a thought is not necessarily true because it is pleasant, and that an expectation is not necessarily well founded because it seems to enrich the life. That may be so; and yet a great thought is itself a great argument, in some cases. If it were not so, life on its highest levels would be illusory, fraudulent, and insane. A great thought is only the report of the intellectual advance-guard of the human race: a great hope is only a prophecy of the human soul anticipating its destiny. If it were not so, what a tragedy or a chaos life, in its loftiest developments, would be! And yet, everything far-reaching in Nature suggests that life is not tragic and chaotic, but melodious and orderly.

This suggests at once a basis of belief that takes us to altogether different ground. Modern science

in pronouncing the word *evolution*, and in tracing back all forms of life to processes of slow development instead of to acts of sudden creation, seems to have done not a little to destroy what has been called "faith." But that is only an incident in a great transition. We are passing on to faith more securely rooted, not to the loss or death of faith; and this very doctrine of evolution will immensely help us. Man is on pilgrimage: that is the glorious thought which this doctrine teaches us. And is not that the doctrine which Paul and John teach? "Now are we sons of God," said John, "but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." "It doth not yet appear." This sonship of ours will develop into higher and more beautiful forms of being in the Father's house beyond; and we shall become more and more "like Him" as we rise higher and higher to "see Him as He is." But, apart from this religious consideration, the law of evolution definitely suggests unlimited advance, and almost suggests, and certainly is not out of harmony with, the splendid hope of evolution from the seen into the unseen, and the persistence of mind and soul as an independent existence when their connection with matter is at an end. Mr. Row's hint in this direction deserves distinct attention; but it must be carried a great deal

farther. An influential secularist lately said that the question of immortality was really not necessarily a religious question at all ; and surely he was right. Man's immortality is an entirely separate question, and has no necessary connection with doctrines of retribution and opinions concerning heaven and hell. If man is immortal, it must be natural for him to be so ; and if it is natural for him to be so, that can only be because this very law of evolution, working through countless ages to make him man at all, works on to carry him beyond the sphere of things physical into the sphere of things spiritual, into, in fact, the spirit-world, where mind and soul will be as much at home as the body appears to be here. Thus considered, what we call " death " is only one more stage, and a transcendently important one, in man's progressive career : a promotion, not a catastrophe ; not defeat, but victory ; not enthrallment, but emancipation ; not death, but life. And that is what, in the end, this dreaded doctrine of evolution may help us to perceive as true.

This view will appear to be all the more reasonable when we remember that all life seems to proceed from, or to belong to, the unseen. Modern science is doing good service for us here. Seeming to be, in so many ways, materialistic, it is really prepar-

ing for us a sublime basis of belief. It is tracing all life into the unseen. It confesses itself unable to account for the production of the simplest thought. It leads us to the boundaries of the seen and leaves us there, with the humble message that the great secret lies in the impenetrable darkness beyond. Thank God for that! Life, then, seems to belong to the unseen. It is not only Paul who says that "the things which are seen are temporal, and the things which are not seen are eternal." The least believing man of science says that too. The most determined materialist looks up from his knife, his microscope, and his test tubes, and confesses that life eludes him after all. The materialist does not even know what matter is. He calls an atom "a point of force," but he cannot tell what force is, and how force, which is not matter, can develop itself or be developed or manifested as matter; still less can he tell how atoms in their movements, with any number of chemical constituents to help them, can produce a living creature who actually imagines that he is free. And all this is comparatively new; and the hopeful thing is that the more we know, the more we see we do not know, and are not likely to know. It is all the difference between the child who thinks he knows all about the heavens, and feels pretty sure

that the sun is about as big as the table, and that the stars are tiny lamps, and the astronomer whose truer knowledge lays before him the vaster problem. So modern science, even in its most materialistic moods, is leading us from mystery to mystery, and lands us at last on the strange boundary-line which divides the unseen from the seen: but it never ceases to tell us that the great secret is on the other side.

One other basis of belief may be mentioned here, and perhaps with some hope that it may hereafter be considered more seriously than seems possible now. In every age of the world, and in every nation; it has been believed that, at times, the unseen has been able to manifest itself in the sphere of the seen. The late William Howitt's voluminous work, "The History of the Supernatural in all Ages and Nations," abundantly proves that the Jewish, Christian, and Pagan religions are full of instances of so-called supernatural relations between the unseen and the seen, and, in our own day, millions of people in all parts of the world, and these not the least credible and thoughtful of mankind, persist in maintaining that communion between the unseen and the seen may, under certain conditions, be enjoyed. It is only to be expected that such experiences should be tainted by fraud and embarrassed by folly;



but it is very difficult to believe that where there has been so much smoke there has been no fire, and that all the solemn records and testimonies of ancient and modern times have nothing but hungry credulity or discreditable trickery behind them. Besides, if we are in any sense believers in the Old and New Testaments, we are committed to spiritual appearances, and the occasional passing over of unseen beings into the sphere of the seen. The Old Testament is full of it, and the New has plenty of it; and unless we say that every one of these spiritual appearances recorded in the Bible was a delusion, or was special, exceptional, and strictly miraculous, we are bound to come to the conclusion that, under certain conditions, there may be intercourse between beings in the spheres of the unseen and the seen. It does not follow that such intercourse will be equally possible in all ages or in all conditions of society; or that it will necessarily be always elevated, or productive of high spiritual results; or that what is said by beings from beyond the veil will necessarily be wise, or good, or true. But if it can be proved that such beings can demonstrate their presence, it is manifest that, altogether apart from their superiority or inferiority as intelligent beings, we have here the possibility of an immense aid to faith.

I would only add one thought, and I build it on what Mr. Row said we might almost take for granted, from one point of view—that if it were the purpose of man's Creator to call him into judgment hereafter for his conduct here, He would not have left him in the smallest doubt on this subject. Be that as it may, it does seem overwhelmingly clear, if we follow the lines that reason and the moral sense mark out, that if it were the purpose of God to make man's eternal destiny depend upon his faith here, He would have made both the fact of that eternal destiny and the truth of the right faith abundantly clear to him. But, to use Mr. Row's own words, "this is precisely what God has not done." Men are as divided as ever about the right faith, and seem likely to be so. Does not that suggest a doubt as to whether man's eternal destiny is, after all, being determined here; and a still further doubt whether his faith, or opinions in time, and his destiny in eternity, have anything to do with one another? "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." That is good sense and good doctrine, and beyond that it is difficult to go. If man persists after what we call death, his moral and spiritual and intellectual place of ending here will be his place of beginning hereafter; and we may reasonably hope that the process of education

and development below may be continued above, and that the life of progress in the unseen will be even more orderly, natural, and hopeful than the old earth-life in the seen.

## ARTICLE IV.

BY RABBI HERMANN ADLER.

IT will be my purpose in this article to indicate the strong foundations of the belief in a future life to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures. The author of a preceding paper, the Rev. Prebendary Row, maintains that "the entire range of ancient thought prior to the Advent left the question whether a conscious existence remained for man after death entirely doubtful." He argues that "nothing affords a stronger proof of the inability of reason alone to place the belief in a future state on a sure foundation than the position which it occupies in the Scriptures of the Old Testament." The revelations which these Scriptures record contain, in his opinion, *no direct affirmations of the existence of a future state.* It will be the aim of the following pages to show that this proposition is untenable. And, indeed, if it be agreed that the Hebrew Scriptures are divinely inspired, how is it possible that the doctrine of human immortality could have been omitted from its teachings?

It is true, Holy Writ is not a catechism or

manual of religion, in the ordinary sense of the word. It does not contain a catalogue, succinctly drawn up and correctly classified, of the various dogmas which we are to believe. Its primary purpose is to teach us our duty in life. The Pentateuch is called in Hebrew "Torah," a word derived from the verb "Jarah," to teach; it is the book which instructs us in the way we should go. Even as this hallowed volume does not seek to demonstrate the existence of God by laboured processes of thought, but assumes it as an indisputable verity in its initial words, thus it does not attempt to prove the doctrine of a life hereafter. But such strong indirect allusions pervade the Hebrew Scriptures, that the truth must force itself upon every unprejudiced reader that the immortality of the soul formed an integral portion of Jewish belief from the most ancient times.

The creation of man is introduced by the words, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" (Gen. i. 27). What sense did these words convey to the Hebrews in the time of Moses? Could it give them the notion that any *material* likeness of God was here referred to? Such a conclusion is obviously impossible. Again and again we find the legislator urging upon his hearers the paramount doctrine

that God has no corporeal image, nor any bodily form whatever. "When the Lord spake to you out of the midst of the fire, you heard the sound of words, but you saw no similitude" (Deut. iv. 12). This teaching is so positive and clear that the Israelites could not possibly believe that the expression "Divine image" involved any material resemblance. To the Hebrews the words "Bezelem Elohim" must have had a purely spiritual signification. This phraseology taught them that man was endowed with a soul which resembled the Divine spirit in being invisible and undying, and thus we are told in the parallel narrative which records the creation of man, "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). Here emphatic expression is given to the dualism of man, his physical and spiritual nature. With respect to his body—his outward organism, his anatomical structure, and his physical constitution—man bears a close affinity to the inferior animals. But in addition thereto he has the breath of life, which makes him a living soul.\* It may thus be inferred from

\* Certain Hebrew scholars maintain that this doctrine of a dual life is disclosed even in the fact that the Hebrew synonym for life (chajim) has a plural form.

the very first page of the Pentateuch that the immortality of the human soul was a principle well known and fully understood even in those early ages of mankind. And indeed many of the incidents recorded in the books of Moses only become intelligible when we bear this in mind. Scripture insists throughout on the belief in a just God, who does not fail to recompense those who serve Him with an upright heart. Now, one of the earliest recorded incidents in the history of the human race is the fatal enmity between Cain and Abel. Abel, on whom God is stated to have looked with favour, is cut off at an early age, subsequent to, and, indeed, in consequence of, an act which had rendered him worthy of Divine grace. If the sacred historian knew only of earthly rewards for the virtuous, what possible influence could his advice to act conformably to God's will exercise upon his hearers, seeing that Abel's pious act involved him in immediate death? Surely the historian and his hearers must have been equally impressed by the conviction that Abel received his guerdon after death, in—what the Rabbis aptly termed—the world of souls. It is said farther on : “ Enoch walked with God ; and he was not, for God took him ” (Gen. v. 24). Enoch had been an upright and pious man, and yet he lived but very

few years compared with the age usually attained in antediluvian times. Could his destiny have been annihilation? Can this be the meaning of the words "for God took him?" Verily the Israelites of those days must have understood that Enoch was taken away to enjoy a better and happier existence than the earthly life with its toil and suffering.

We next pass to the lives of the Patriarchs. The Lord announces unto Abraham the trials that would befall his descendants, and then gives him the gracious assurance that he himself would be exempted from those sufferings: "But thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace" (Gen. xv. 15). This phrase cannot signify that his remains were to rest next to those of his sires, for the fact of the burial is separately mentioned. "Thou shalt be buried in a good old age." And indeed Abraham was not interred next his father, for his body was sepulchred in a cave purchased in the land of Canaan, whilst the graves of his ancestors were situated in the far-off country on the east of the Euphrates. Thus, also, when it is recorded that Abraham died, we find that, after the fact of his death has been mentioned, "he was gathered to his people," the act of sepulture is mentioned separately. This renders it clear that such expressions as "thou shalt come to



thy fathers," or "he was gathered to his people," cannot be understood in a material sense, but must have conveyed a spiritual meaning. They tell us that when at death Abraham's soul was separated from the body, it did not cease its existence, but was united with the spirits of the kinsfolk that had preceded him. It was this precious hope that sustained Jacob on his deathbed: "I am to be gathered unto my people" (Gen. xlix. 29). He felt that he was not about to go to a strange and unfamiliar land, but that he would rejoin the souls of his fathers and of those dear to him. Similar expressions are used when the deaths of Aaron and of Moses are recorded. Does not the recurrence of such a phrase prove incontestably how firm a root the belief in the eternal existence of the soul must even then have taken in the national mind?

In passing on to the legislative parts of the Pentateuch, we meet with similar undesigned evidences of a belief in a future state. We read in Leviticus xx. 2, 3: "Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that give any of their children unto Molech, he shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. And I will set My face against that man, and I will cut him off from among his people; because he has

given of his seed to Molech, to defile My sanctuary, and to profane My holy name." What can be the meaning of cutting off the Molech-worshipper from among his people? It cannot signify that the Lord would shorten his existence on earth, for it has already been stated that he is to suffer death by stoning. The penalty must, therefore, be one having reference to the state of his soul in an after-life, viz., to his being cut off from future bliss. And this would seem to be the signification of the punishment of *Kareth*, excision, entailed by the infraction of certain important laws. Again, when Balaam prays: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Num. xxiii. 10), the aim and scope of his supplication could surely not have been that his physical dissolution should be like that of the pious, for there is no visible distinction between the death of the virtuous and of the wicked. If death were annihilation, what could it signify to him whether it be that of the heathen or of the Israelite? Both suffered the same agony, both were liable to the same pang. But Balaam, quickened by Divine inspiration, looked beyond this present life. He, albeit a heathen prophet, saw the light of immortality gleaming through the dark shadows of death, and therefore, ere he concludes his majestic vaticina-

tions, he prays that his last end, his life hereafter, may be like that of the righteous in Israel.

The question, however, now suggests itself: If it be true that this belief in a life hereafter did prevail in these early ages of the Hebrew commonwealth, how comes it that *only temporal blessings are held out in the Pentateuch as the rewards of righteousness, whilst earthly calamities only are denounced upon those who have set at nought the Divine behests?*

In answer to this question it has been justly remarked that the promises and menaces of the Pentateuch are not at all addressed to the individual. In every instance they appeal to the nation at large. And for a nation it is obvious that there can be no immortality in heaven, inasmuch as there is no nationality in heaven. The destinies of each people must be fulfilled on earth. The great truth was to be impressed upon the Israelites again and again, that their national prosperity depended absolutely upon their national obedience to the Divine law,—the great verity which every people should take to heart, that righteousness exalteth a nation, and that wickedness leads to its ruin. I would also refer to the answer suggested by Maimonides in the introduction to his commentary on the Mishna of the tenth chapter of

Sanhedrin. He argues that the Hebrews, just manumitted from the slavery of Egypt, ever hankering after its flesh-pots, looking back with lingering fondness to the time when they did eat bread to the full, were not as yet able to appreciate the grandeur and blessedness of happiness in the life to come. They were therefore promised, in the first instance, length of days and multitudinous offspring. But as we advance in the Bible we find the spiritual, in contradistinction to the material, reward dwelt upon with greater and greater insistence. We hear the inspired writers proclaiming in clear and impassioned tones their full conviction of a life beyond the narrow span here on earth; declaring their innermost belief that reunion with their beloved affords them solace for their bereavement; that nearness unto God is an all-sufficient recompense for the toils and trials they have endured upon earth.

It is narrated in the Second Book of Samuel, that when David's dearly beloved child was struggling with a mortal illness, he was prostrated with grief, he wept and fasted. The child died, and his servants were afraid to tell him of its death, lest his grief, so great whilst he had yet hope, should be excessive now that hope was gone. But when their mournful faces and tremulous whisperings informed

him of the sad tidings, he was roused from his grief, worshipped at the altar of God, and did eat of the bread prepared for him. "What thing is this that thou hast done?" inquired the servants. "Thou didst fast and weep for the child whilst it was yet alive, but when the child was dead thou didst arise and eat bread." And David said to them, "While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Sam. xii. 22, 23). Now David surely did not refer in these words to the mausoleum wherein his remains would hereafter be laid beside those of the infant. What consolation would this thought have afforded him and his sorrowing wife? With no uncertain voice he here expresses his entire belief that he would one day be reunited with his beloved child. It is this reflection which enabled him to repress his own grief and to comfort Bathsheba.

That this is the correct interpretation of David's words is abundantly proved by the deep convictions of immortality that breathe in his Psalms. He is penetrated to the full with the conscious faith in the perpetuity of the soul, the light, the glory of

God's rational creatures, the soul that will see light in God's light, whose portion is the Lord for ever. In the sixteenth Psalm, well meriting to be termed "Michtam," the Golden Psalm, he gives voice to enthusiastic joy that his lines have fallen in pleasant places. The source of his exultation is not that he enjoys prosperity on earth, wealth, and power, but because he feels that God will not leave his soul in the nether world, nor suffer his righteous one to see corruption, but will show him the path of life, in His presence the fulness of joy, at His right hand the pleasures for evermore. Thus, also, in the seventeenth Psalm, David, after having spoken with disdain of the men of the world who have their portion in this life, closes with the words, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

The sublime truth sung by the sweet singer of Israel is echoed with no less fervour and vigour by the other Psalmists. The forty-ninth Psalm presents the doubts as to Divine justice which crowd upon the minds of those who are troubled by the apparent glory of the careless and insolent, and the sorrows of the poor and the virtuous. The Psalmist announces the answer to our questionings and disquietude. The morning comes which

follows the night of death, and with it comes the awakening; the beauty and grandeur of the wicked and haughty fall into utter dissolution. "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the nether world, for He shall receive me. Selah" (ver. 15). He does not expect that his body will be delivered from the universal doom of man, but, fired by real living faith in a living God, he feels assured that there is a future state in which the Just Ruler of the world will make full amends for the unequal distribution of burdens which He wisely permits in this life of probation. This thought is dwelt upon with even greater emphasis by Asaph in the seventy-third Psalm, wherein the writer, seeking to solve the problem of the prosperity of the wicked and the adversity of the pious, finds the solution when he went into the sanctuary of God: "Then understood I their end." He is sustained by the hope, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory." "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." What stronger assertion could there be of personal immortality?

It seems inexplicable to me how, in the face of expressions such as these, Prebendary Row observes that "with them (the Psalmists) this world is the

one scene of life and joy. Here, not in a future state, the Divine providences are to receive their vindication." In proof of his position he refers to the dark view which the Psalmists take of death. He alludes, no doubt, to texts such as these: "For in death there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" (Ps. vi. 5); or again, "What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise Thee? Shall it declare Thy truth?" (Ps. xxx. 9). It is true that at first sight it would seem as though these verses imply that the state of the departed is one of darkness, that with death consciousness ceases and all knowledge is lost. When these texts are thus read out by themselves, they apparently justify the assertion that the belief of individual Israelites concerning the future state was vague and shadowy. But if these verses be examined in their context, I think they will be found quite consistent with a belief in immortality.

The Psalms from which the extracts in question are taken were composed at a season of extreme depression, when the writer was sick unto death, when David felt himself estranged from God in consequence of his great sin. What prospect does his after-state offer unto him who has forfeited Heaven's favour? He is aware that the earthly



life is the season for serving God, and that only by sincere and active repentance he can obtain forgiveness of his trespass. If opportunity be not given him for working out his soul's salvation, he has grievous cause to dread Divine punishment. The revealed Word of God does not describe the nature of this penalty. It only hints at it by the terrible phrase of "cutting off the soul." From this annihilation he prays to be delivered. "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul : O save me for Thy mercies' sake ! For in death there is no remembrance of Thee : in the grave who shall give Thee thanks ?" (Ps. vi. 4, 5). He laments, in the bitterness of his grief, that if he be cut off in his sin, he will be unable to serve his God. But how can it be maintained that David had no firm belief in immortality ? David, who, when he is at peace with God, declares with unshaken confidence, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

Prebendary Row quotes a passage from the prayer of Hezekiah, which, he avers, furnishes an adequate representation of the popular belief of those days. "The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee ; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the

living, he shall praise Thee as I do this day; the father to the children shall make known Thy truth" (Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19). I do not admit that this passage involves a denial of immortality. Hezekiah but expresses that joy in life, the delight of abiding with his kindred, not unnatural in one who has just been snatched from the jaws of death. We may, perhaps, compare this outburst of joy in life with the words which Euripides puts into the mouth of Iphigenia in Aulis in the drama of that title:—

Κακῶς ζῆν κρείσσον ἢ καλῶς θανέν.

"Better to live in shame than to die admired."

The French translator, horrified by such a sentiment, renders the passage, "Une vie malheureuse est même plus prisee qu'une glorieuse mort." And indeed Euripides has been severely censured for enunciating so base and low-minded a motive for clinging to life. But Mr. Paley rightly vindicates the poet, and justly describes the sentiment as the artless and natural expression of a maiden reluctant to die in the prime of life.

It is further asserted by Mr. Row that the grounds on which a belief in a future state rested were *exceedingly uncertain, as there is not a single distinct reference throughout the prophetic Scriptures to the consequences with which sin will be*

*attended in the unseen world. I deem this assertion much too sweeping.* I would refer the learned writer to Isaiah xxxiii. 14: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" This passage does not refer to the terrors of Gehenna and purgatory, for the Hebrew seers did not teach a belief in endless torture and everlasting torment. Yet reference would seem indubitably made here to the day of future judgment; and the prophet asks, Who is fit to enter into communion with God? who is worthy to stand the test of His never-relaxing holiness? who can endure His searching scrutiny? The reason why the prophets do not more strongly accentuate the penalty of sin in the world to come has already been before indicated. They address nations rather than individuals. They were the great political counsellors; they stood like Daniel amid the riot and wantoning of earth, teaching men to decipher the message of God, written as with the finger of a man's hand on the banqueting halls of kings and the council halls of peoples—the message that righteousness exalteth a nation and sin is its reproach. The penalties, therefore, that were denounced had to apply to the existence of the nation on earth, and could not be relegated to the silent land. But whoever reads passages such

as the following, wherein Isaiah, with the spirit of the Lord upon him, announces "He will destroy death for ever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (xxv. 8);\* or wherein he addresses his sublime inspiration to the house of Israel, "Thy dead men shall live, my dead bodies will arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. xxvi. 19); or when Ezekiel preaches his splendid vision, the revival of the dead bones (chap. xxxvii.), who dare assert that the prophets were ignorant or careless of the doctrine of a future life?

It is true that the existence hereafter is not brought forward in the Book of Job as the only means to assert eternal providence and justify the ways of God to man. It would take us altogether beyond the scope and limits of this paper to explain the why and wherefore of this. But it appears strange to me that a clergyman should speak disparagingly, and describe as of doubtful interpretation a passage which has been incorporated in the Burial Service of the Church on account of its fervid attestation of immortality. From his narrow-

\* No elaborate linguistic argument is required to convince the Hebraist that this is the correct rendering of the passage, and not, as the Authorised Version has it, "He will swallow up death in victory."

mined judges on earth Job turns to God on high, beseeching Him to hear and try his cause, and in the strength of his appeal his eye grows clear and undimmed. His sickness is mortal, he has no hope in life, but his intense conviction that justice must and will be done to him possesses him more and more. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and after my skin has been destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God" (Job xix. 25, 26). A Jewish commentator rightly observes that this is the sum total of all that has been said and written concerning immortality—"After my dissolution I shall see God."

One book, it is true, exists in which doubts are expressed concerning the future existence of the soul. And the very incorporation of such a treatise in the sacred library bears eloquent testimony to the spirit of comprehensive liberality which characterised the compilers of the Canon, their desire to bring before us every mood and phase of the human mind. The Book of Ecclesiastes shows forth the weariness which overtakes the man whose chief good and market of his time is sensual gratification, whose mind, gloomed by doubt, utters the despairing cry, "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing be-

falleth them; as the one dies, so dieth the other." But the book likewise shows us the process by which men are to fight out and conquer the doubts that spring up in their hearts. At the close the preacher gives utterance to the emphatic declaration, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it" (xii. 7). In these words there is neither doubt nor wavering. The dualism of man's nature is fully acknowledged. Entire belief in the soul's immortality triumphs over all the gloom and weariness that had tinged his previous meditations, removing at once and for ever the thought of death as annihilation.

I conclude my citations with the text from Daniel xii. 2, 3, which needs no comment: "And the multitude of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to enduring shame and contempt.\* And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Nor was this belief

\* I am loth to introduce an additional theme of controversy into this Symposium, but I deem it needful to mention, that as the eternity of Divine punishment is not a Jewish doctrine, I have rendered *olam* "enduring," and not "everlasting," in accordance with the signification which this word bears in Exod. xxi. 6; 1 Sam. xxi. 12, *et passim*.

regarded as a mere barren dogma inculcated by the teachers of the nation; it was the firm conviction that nerved heroic martyrs to face death without flinching. When, during the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, the seven brethren were brought forth to suffer death for refusing to transgress the Divine command, the hope of a happy hereafter sustained them to endure the cruellest of tortures. And when he was at the last gasp, one of these protomartyrs said (2 Macc. vii. 9), "Thou, like a fury, takest us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise us up who have died for His laws unto everlasting life." As a further proof how deeply rooted the belief in immortality had become at this time, I may refer to the statement made in the same book (chap. xii. 43-45), that Judas Maccabeus "sent to Jerusalem to offer a sin-offering, doing therein very well and honestly in that he was mindful of the resurrection; for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favour laid up for those who died godly, it was an holy and good thought." There is no reasonable ground for believing that this work was composed later than a century B.C.E. We see thus that *long before the*

*Christian dispensation the belief in immortality*, taught as it had been by the authorised exponents of the Law, supported as it was by all that the Scriptures enunciated concerning the justice and mercy of God, *was a powerful moral force* prompting the professors of Judaism to evince their religious faith in one of its sublimest forms—a willing and glad-some sacrifice of life.

I may also refer to the fact that Josephus seeks to restrain his soldiers from committing suicide by impressing upon them this self-same doctrine (“Wars of the Jews,” book iii., chapter 8, section 5). “Know you not that those who depart out of this life according to the law of nature, that their souls obtain a most holy place in heaven, while the souls of those who have acted madly against themselves are received by the darkest place in Hades?”

Now I would carefully guard myself against *the assumption that the Revelation of Scripture was the sole foundation in the Hebrew's mind of a firm belief in immortality*. I have dwelt upon it with some fulness of detail, both because the inspired utterances constituted one of the strongest attestations to the “people of the book,” and likewise because so many, to my mind, erroneous opinions are entertained concerning the position



which this doctrine occupies in the Scriptures committed to our keeping. But it should be clearly understood that the *voice of reason and of conscience*, all our belief concerning the attributes of God and the nature of the soul, *strengthen and confirm the Bible doctrine*.

The space at my disposal will only permit me to advert to this branch of the subject with extremest brevity. The Talmud teaches that it is the purpose of life here on earth to prepare ourselves for the life hereafter. "This world is to be likened to the porch, the world to come unto the palace. Prepare thyself in the porch, that thou mayest be worthy to enter the palace." Our religious philosophers, such as Saadjah Hagaon, Jehudah Halevi, Moses Maimonides, Joseph Albu, and many others, treat at great length of the proofs adduced by Natural Religion in support of immortality; but no writer has dwelt upon this theme with greater eloquence and ability than Moses Mendelssohn in his *Phädon*—a work which has been translated into the language of all civilised nations. His position, as developed in the first dialogue, may perhaps be thus briefly condensed. The soul is immortal because a *transition from existence to non-existence, and indeed the annihilation of any being, does not come within the range of possibility*. Since the

soul is a simple being, not composed of parts, and, therefore, not capable of being dissolved into any original elements, it must continue in its present state. Even after death the soul will think, feel, and exercise volition, though devoid of bodily organs. Its happiness will consist in understanding the nature of the Godhead and witnessing the solution of all the dark and perplexing questions of earth. In the second and third dialogue he confutes the arguments which might be raised against this position. I may fitly conclude my paper in the closing words which the Jewish philosopher has put into the mouth of Socrates: "He who fulfils his duty here on earth with constancy, despite all difficulties, and who bears all adversities with resignation to the Divine will, must enjoy the reward of his virtues hereafter. And the man of vice cannot pass away without being brought to the knowledge, in some mode or other, that evil-doing is not the path to happiness. In one word, it would be contrary to all the attributes of God, His wisdom, His goodness, His justice, if He had created rational beings that strive for perfection for a merely temporary evanescent existence."

## ARTICLE V.

BY PROFESSOR G. G. STOKES, F.R.S.

IN discussing this question we may naturally ask whose belief is supposed to be referred to? For both the belief itself—if, in many cases, there can be said to have been any belief at all—and the thoughts connected with it have varied immensely from age to age and from nation to nation. It might be proposed to discuss the origin of the widespread belief in or suspicion of man's immortality, or else what it is that to us, as Christians, constitutes the evidence on which we accept it. In the present article it is proposed to consider the subject mainly from the latter point of view.

A belief in the immortality of man might conceivably rest on foundations which were either (1) physical, or (2) metaphysical, or (3) teleological, or (4) moral, or (5) depending on revelation.

1. By physical evidence is meant such as might conceivably be derived from a study of the visible human organism. Now here the evidence is notoriously negative. The ponderable matter of which

the organism consists may be resolved by the chemist into its constituent elements, just like any other ponderable matter ; at death, by far the greater part of it falls into decay, so that all traces of organisation are lost ; and the little that we know respecting the relation between the visible frame and thought goes to show that thinking, as we know it in ourselves, is intimately associated with the condition of the brain. When the brain is diseased the processes of thought are very frequently deranged ; when the supply of blood to it is insufficient, as in a faint, thought is in abeyance. The natural inference would be, that when, as at death, the visible functions of the brain cease altogether, thought would cease too, and as we know no natural process by which the brain can be re-constituted, that death would make an end of the man altogether.

Yet even physical observation affords some glimmer of a suspicion that the relation between the mind and the body may not be so intimate as at first sight might appear ; that thought may be rather a function of the mind than the mind itself. Thus when a man faints he ceases to think, but when he comes to again, the thread of thought is taken up just where it was left off ; and unless the surrounding circumstances were such as to satisfy

the man's reason that time had elapsed, he might be quite unconscious that he had fainted at all. Yet meanwhile the bodily functions have been going on, feebly it is true, but still going on, so that the body is not in the state in which it was at the commencement of the faint. The writer recollects reading of a bricklayer's labourer who was struck on the head by a falling brick just as he was speaking, and thereby rendered unconscious, in which state he remained for a very considerable time; and who, on coming to himself, finished the sentence which he had begun before he was struck. This raises a suspicion that after all it may not be the being himself, the *ego*, that is so closely related to the condition of the brain, but only the functions of the being; that the being may exist even though the material structure go to decay, and may be capable of resuscitation in connection, perhaps, with some other sort of organisation. But this does not go beyond a mere suspicion; the most probable inference derived from mere physical observation undoubtedly would be that the being perished at death.

2. Some have attempted to infer immortality for man from a discussion of the nature of the soul; from considerations differing from the reasoning on physical observations in the circumstance that the

subject of contemplation is the mind, not matter. As the writer has never seen an argument of this class for immortality which to his own mind had the slightest weight, he may be excused for passing on.

3. It is a matter of common observation that the structure of organised beings is adapted to their mode of life; their organs, to the use that is made of them. The most natural idea to form of this is, that the organs were *designed* to subserve the uses that are made of them. Moreover, animals are endowed with instincts or appetites which lead them to the performance of those acts which are necessary for their well-being; as, for example, the appetite of hunger leads to the taking of that food which is necessary for the sustentation of the animal frame. Here again we most naturally regard the appetite as designedly implanted in order to lead to the performance of the act.

Now, it may be argued, man is capable of and aspires after continual progress. He would fain form schemes stretching far beyond a lifetime; nay, he does often form them, only to be cut short by death. Death seems to come in awkwardly, a spoiler of all his plans. Surely he would not have been endowed with such aspirations if it had not been intended that he should have the means of

satisfying them. There must, therefore, in spite of the tremendous appearances to the contrary, be some state after death in which the being still survives; in which that progress which appears to be cut short by death is continued. And if death, notwithstanding its tremendous aspect, is unable to blot out man from being, what other change could we imagine likely to do so? Surely, therefore, man must be by nature an immortal being, notwithstanding the perishable character of his outward frame.

Now, though it is rather a wide step to take to argue from a bodily appetite to a mental aspiration, there would be some force in the argument if we might assume that man is in a natural state; that he is in the state in which he was intended to be. Accordingly it seems to be those more especially who push to the utmost the theory of evolution, and write as if it had been one of the established conclusions of science, who lean on an argument of this kind.

But are we justified in regarding evolution as an established conclusion of science? Take, for example, the origin of life. The experiments of our foremost scientific men are adverse to the supposition that it can have originated spontaneously, by the mere interaction of the known laws of

matter which we can investigate. We are obliged to have recourse to something more than mere evolution, if by evolution be meant the sequence of cause and effect irrespective of intelligence. And if in one case we are obliged to have recourse to this "something more," it would be unphilosophical to discard it as a possible solution of other problems which we do not seem likely to be able to solve on mere physical principles. Take, for example, the vastly varied forms of animal life, linked together indeed by close affinities in neighbouring cases, but presenting nevertheless enormous differences. Can it be pretended that we have any valid evidence of the derivation of these from some common form by the blind operation of natural laws? If indeed we start with the *assumption* that the question of the origin of the diversity in the forms of life which we see belongs entirely to the purview of science, then, in spite of the improbabilities which the least unlikely theory that we can conceive may present, the theory, as being the least unlikely, acquires a certain amount of probability. But that depends entirely on the admission of the fundamental assumption; and what right have we to make any such assumption at all?

If, to take the particular question which most



nearly concerns ourselves, we ask what is the origin of man? the actual evidence, as distinguished from conjecture, which science is able to afford appears to be simply *nil*. If now from scientific conjecture we turn to that book which we hold to contain a revelation made from God to man, we read of man as having originated in a special creative act—respecting the precise mode of creation we need not here inquire—as having been created “in the image of God,” whatever that may involve. We are further told that man was created in a condition of innocence, from which, by a misuse of the free will with which he was endowed, he fell, vitiating thereby his moral condition, and not only his own but that of his descendants; for the corruption of the moral nature, like so many other things, descends by heredity. The further consideration of changes in his external condition entailed by the Fall belongs rather to the fifth division; for the present it will suffice to observe that man, as he is, is not in a natural but in an unnatural condition, if by “natural condition” be meant that for which he was originally fitted. Hence, while the teleological argument for the immortality of our race is of some weight on the hypothesis of evolution (or rather such a modification of evolution as would not wholly exclude

design), it falls to the ground when we adopt the scriptural account of the creation and fall of man. For we have clearly no right to assume that man's destiny in his fallen state corresponds with aspirations which may have been implanted in him in his natural, *i.e.*, unfallen condition. The desire of immortality no more proves that a man will be immortal than the desire of happiness proves that he will be happy.

4. The moral argument is founded on a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, and a conviction that His government must be strictly just. It is felt that in some way it must be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked. Now it is true that on the whole virtue is conducive to happiness and vice to misery even in this life, at least in a tolerably settled state of society; but there are plenty of exceptions; and this leads to the suspicion, or it may even be the expectation, of some state of conscious existence after death in which these anomalies will be rectified, and virtue and vice will have their due recompense. This is, however, no evidence in favour of immortality, except in so far as it tends to remove the bar to it which arises from the *prima facie* appearance that death is an abolition of being; for it is obvious that, so far as the necessity for some future state

of requital goes, that state might be temporary for all, or eternal for all, or temporary for some and eternal for others.

5. Accordingly, independently of revelation, we can but surmise that mankind in general, or that a portion of mankind, may be immortal. Let us turn now to what we, as Christians, accept as a revelation made from God, including, of course, such revelations as were made to those who lived under the older dispensations.

In the scriptural account of the creation and fall of man there is nothing to indicate that man was by creation an immortal being. On the contrary, his immortality is represented as depending, not on his condition by creation, but on something outside of him, his right to the use of which was contingent on his obedience, and from which he was cut off at his fall, "lest he should live for ever." There is nothing to indicate that the "death" which his disobedience entailed affected one part only of his nature, or was anything short of utter abolition. In the declaration made to the woman there is indeed a dim indication of some victory over the serpent to be achieved in some way through the seed of the woman. But what should be the nature of this victory, or how it should be brought about, could not be gathered

from so brief a hint; and if a fuller revelation were then made, at least we are not informed of it.

Accordingly it is not to be wondered at that in the records we possess of the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations (at least till towards the close of the latter), so very little indication appears of any undoing of that special result of the Fall, that "death passed upon all men." Prebendary Row has clearly pointed out how little, comparatively speaking, the thoughts of even good men in those ages were exercised by the contemplation of a future life, and how vague were their ideas respecting it. They died, we are told, in faith. But faith, we are at the same time told, may be of a very elementary character, consisting of a belief that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Some such kind of faith, more or less definite according to the extent of what was revealed to the individual or generally to the men of his time, constituting a view from afar of promises not received, may have led good men to a more or less confident anticipation that in some way God would not leave His servants to be triumphed over by death, but that there must be something in store for them beyond.

It is not proposed here to trace the origin of the

far more definite views respecting a future life entertained by the Jews, or at least by a large party among them, before the Christian era. Let us pass on to consider the evidence of immortality which we find in the clearer light of the Christian dispensation.

Now, over and over again in the New Testament we find the offer of what is called *eternal life* to those who will accept it on the conditions on which it is offered. Those persons who bring to the interpretation of such passages a preconceived notion of man's natural immortality are obliged to give to the expression "eternal life" a figurative meaning, and to *eliminate* from it the ordinary idea of life as living existence. For clearly that would not be offered as a gift which is already in possession, nor would that be spoken of as attained to by some which is the common lot of all. All, it is true we are told, are to be raised again, but not to all will it be a resurrection of eternal life. To the wicked it will only be a resurrection of judgment. Their fate is one over the details of which a veil is cast, but the language in which it is spoken of and the imagery by which it is illustrated seem to point to a miserable destruction, and in any case indicate something very terrible.

To the Christian, then, it is contended, the evi-

dence of immortality rests upon its promise as a gift—a gift supernatural in its nature, and one the promise of which is attested by supernatural evidence. It involves resurrection, though resurrection alone does not guarantee it; and even the most strenuous advocates of a natural immortality, if they admit a resurrection at all, do not maintain that it is other than supernatural. Indeed, whatever may be thought of the condition of man between death and resurrection, in Scripture the question of a future life is bound up with that of the resurrection. Thus our Lord infers the resurrection, and implies that the Sadducees themselves might have inferred it from the words at the bush; and St. Paul, in contending that the doctrine of the resurrection belongs to the essentials of the faith, boldly uses the argument that its denial logically leads to the adoption of the manifestly unchristian maxim that we had best make the most of this life while we have it, for it is our all—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The doctrine of a natural immortality irrespective of resurrection would have led to a very different conclusion.

Let it not be thought that to rest our hopes of immortality on the promise of the gift of eternal life lowers our idea of what this expression conveys; that those who attach a purely figurative interpre-

tation to it understand by it something far higher. The notion that to base our hopes of immortality on the promise of eternal life involves any degradation of the meaning of the term merely arises from the previous divorce of the idea of immortality from that of obedience and concurrent happiness. Once accept the scriptural account of the Fall in what appears at least to be its straightforward interpretation—that man by disobedience forfeited immortality—and it stands to reason that immortality would only be restored in connection with a scheme whereby the moral effects of the fall should be remedied, and man restored to a condition of complete righteousness. Thus the promise of eternal life as involving eternal living existence carries with it *even in idea*, as it does by the express declarations of Scripture, all that the advocates of a purely figurative interpretation put upon it; but it carries something more, namely, living existence itself.

In this view, then, which, though evidently entertained in very early times, has only of late years been revived to any great extent, and which involves a more simple and straightforward interpretation of the declarations of Scripture on the subject than that which half a century ago was commonly received, the teaching of Scripture, the moral sense, the indications of science so far as they bear on the

question, are all in harmony. The highest aspirations of those good men of old, who, though they "looked for a city which hath foundations," yet "died in faith, not having received the promises," are fulfilled, and more than fulfilled. The ominous forebodings of the wilful wrongdoer are met by the express proclamation of a very fearful and final doom, of "judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries," but we are not involved in the tremendous ethical difficulties which beset the supposed necessity of attaching an absolutely infinite, positive punishment to the sins of a finite life. Lastly, if a difficulty be felt in believing in a future life on the ground that the keenest scientific investigation fails to give the slightest indication of anything beyond the grave, which is contrary to what might be expected in the case of a naturally immortal being, the reply is—That is precisely what was to have been expected *a priori* on *purely theological* grounds. Man's whole being was forfeited by the Fall, and the future life is not his birthright, but depends on a supernatural dispensation of grace. To look to man's bodily frame for indications of immortality, to look even to his lofty mental powers—lofty indeed, but sadly misused—is to seek the living among the dead. Man must look not into himself but out of himself for



assurance of immortality. "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

## ARTICLE VI.

BY THE REV. W. CROSBY BARLOW, M.A.

IT is to be expected that among Christian thinkers there will be much agreement in the reasons alleged for the "hope that is in us" on this important theme, and one is liable to be led into an iteration which will add no force to the affirmation of the continuance of human life after the "death" of the body, and even for ever.

The foundation of our belief in this matter is *Revelation*. Man's faculty of acquiring knowledge independently of revelation is limited by his opportunities of research, and by the extent of his skill in applying his senses to the discovery of facts, and in interpreting those facts by the operations of his understanding.

Personally acquired knowledge is directly related to the employment of the senses and to the analysis of consciousness. Our senses and our consciousness have, however, nothing to say of themselves to the question, If a man die, does he live again? All that we know on the subject, and even all that

we believe, seems to depend on *revelation from without*. Were it proved that every tribe of men in every age had unanimously and continually held the belief that after the body becomes an unresisting prey to decay the man continues to live and move and to have an unimpaired being, it would still seem true that in every individual the belief originates in a revelation from without. A child reared in absolute loneliness, were such rearing possible, would not become adult in the enjoyment of an articulate speech, nor would he, in the hour and article of death, hold to the hope of immortality. Those who hear no speech utter no words, those who hear no utterance of the fact of immortality can only learn it by living on after what men call death. The belief, whether universal or not, is associated in every individual experience with revelation from without. "They told me, and I thought it true."

Our first answer, then, is a mere regression ; we believe because our fathers believed, and have taught us their faith, just as we know and use the English language as given to us by tradition of the elders. Yet remember that our language is ours not only because it was given to us, but because, also, it meets and satisfies needs which arise from our constitution and surroundings. It is offered

to us, is adapted to our use, and so is adopted and retained. The external revelation of language and its laws is necessary, and it is efficient because in our constitution there is a tacit and potential revealing which is dumb only until from without it receives the means and example of its utterance, and as the externally given language corresponds, or can be made to correspond, to and fulfil the laws of mind, and only so far as it does so can it be accepted by any human being. Every man receives a proffered revelation because and as far as he is a revelation to himself.

Thus, then, the belief in immortality rests on an external revelation which would be valueless but for a prior and internal presence of truth with us. There is, we believe, a universal Divine inflowing of truth into man, and this abides with us, and becomes conscious knowledge or assurance only through external revelation of some kind.

Still our first answer to the question of foundation is thus far imperfect, it gives no account of the origin of the external revelation which it postulates. It is clear that the doctrine of immortality, in however imperfect and rudimentary form, can never have existed save because belief in immortality pre-existed, or at least belief that there is life after death, the one only thing that we know

which suggests cessation of life. Tradition is not the parent of the doctrine, only its custodian and transmitter. Thus men could not speak of immortality before the belief, the idea, originated, and no man could originate this new idea any more than in the hollowed empty hand he can "originate" flower or fruit. The belief in immortality which we have by spoken or written tradition must have come from some superhuman revelation.

Once, then, we know not when or where, a man wondered at a new belief that made death no more dreadful than the passing through an untried pathway into a new land from which there should for ever be no return to the familiar surroundings of the present life. A new belief originated in man because the Eternal, who has hidden all spiritual wisdom, even His own wisdom, in the recesses of our nature, found the occasion and had the means of calling forth that idea in a manner which is not now needed, for now he who hears can tell, and he who is told can confirm for himself in a thousand ways, the truth that man who is, is for evermore. The *inveiling* of the truth, its mute immanence in man, is universal; its revealing has not been so. It has not been proved that all men, everywhere and always, have and have had the belief in question. This has been felt a real difficulty, and the

difficulty has been confessed in this Symposium in the article by the Rev. Prebendary Row in the words, "If we view this subject on merely *a priori* principles, we might almost take it for granted that if it were the purpose of man's Creator to call him into judgment hereafter for his conduct here, He would not have left him in the smallest doubt on this subject." The difficulty, however, becomes less when we reflect that, on the basis of man's immortality, the working theory of the universe is not that the Divine purpose for man is that he should here know all truths that are conceived by us to be important, but that in this life man should be or become fitted for the instruction and development for which another life is the more appropriate sphere. In other words, let it be granted that the aim of this life is the acquiring of a certain moral character, then it will be expected that each nation and each age will have the opportunity of knowing such truths as will help to the formation of the desired disposition ; and that all such truths as for any man at any time are useless for this end would be so much surplusage, not to be expected, nor to be granted. Nor are we bound to believe that the moral standard attained must be the same in every age, or that it must always be accompanied by the same mental persuasions, whether true or false.

Thus it is doubtful whether the notion of conscience in man was an existent idea prior to the time of the later prophets, or perhaps even of the apostles, but, ages before, it was possible for men to learn kindly usefulness, and to make it so far their character as to be fitted thereby for all that instruction which would inevitably come from their subsequent service as ministering spirits. Thus it comes to pass that moral laws which now are recognised as absolute and indisputable were once not acknowledged by even the best men of their age. Our children have clearer knowledge of Nature's laws and of man's duties and destinies than had Abraham and Aristotle. Our capacities, and perhaps our needs, are greater, and the teaching which we have is therefore more complete.

Next the explicit revelation of immortality is an instance of that development which is as certain in the history of knowledge as it is said to be in the history of organic forms. Thus it has been pointed out that Abraham's hope was for posterity, perpetuating his name and influence; that Moses does not allege eternal motives for conduct; that Psalmists had vague views of man's continued being after death; and that though Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel teach the doctrine, we have no clear utterances until the Christian age: life and immortality are

brought to light by Jesus in the Gospel. The discussion of the reasons for this so gradual unfolding of the truth would here be out of place. We notice, however, that Abraham, with his imperfect knowledge on this point and others, was nevertheless led on to moral characters of no mean order,—a servant of Shaddai, a trusting, loving worshipper of the Lord, a brave and self-denying kinsman, moderate in his compelled warfare, and moderate in the hour of triumph; a pious knight-errant as well as a man whose domestic and social virtues grew fairer from day to day, he shows to no disadvantage in comparison with many whose first incentive to holiness has been either the fear of wrath to come or the hope of glory. He feared God and strove earnestly to work righteousness; and thus the Lord formed in him a character that could never be destroyed in death, and he can have found a home in none but a holy and blessed state.

Still we shall err if we suppose that the Old Testament is by any means silent upon this matter. The Lord Jesus has taught us that the name by which Jehovah appeals to the affection of the Israelites is itself a revelation on this subject. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob died, and God was still their God; therefore they were still living, for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.



All live, and live on in the sight of God. This, Jesus says, is the true teaching of the resurrection. True, it is possible for these words to have been heard by Moses without suggesting to him the thought of immortality; but without the belief in life continued he could not have written as he did about the death and rising and burial of the Patriarchs, who not only died and were buried, but also were gathered to their fathers, and this even in the case of Abraham, whose place of burial was far from Haran and Ur of the Chaldees. On the other hand, knowing all that he must have known of Egyptian beliefs of the future, he was the minister, the mediator, of a revelation which, in every line, is dated from the wilderness in which wandered a servile and worldly people, who were all but incapable of any spiritual, or even of any moral, motive. A revelation is of unlimited truth in the Divine, but is limited by the capacity, even by the vernacular, of both its messenger and the people to whom his message is delivered. Externally minded, the people were incapable of making right use of any higher motives than such as the hope of rest in a land flowing with milk and honey, with triumph over hostile nations and exemption from the plagues of Egypt. Probably enough Moses would have chosen that the nation, baptized in sea

and cloud, should have been also initiated into every truth that he had learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, but he was under restraint by that Providence which in every age has said, and even now says, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

The next point is *our reception of what has been thus told us*. Why do we suppose that what we have learned on this question is a reliable and Divine discovery of truth? First, because in its gradual unfolding it has kept in advance of man's mental progress, so as always to be a help and incentive to a more spiritual life; and next, because it satisfies the demands of all precisely in the degree in which it is practically held, and this all the more because it is not a vague but definite teaching which is supplied to us; and next again, because it receives confirmation from all that philosophical thought which best coincides with the facts of human life. Again, one of the surest confirmations of the revealedness of the doctrine is the fact that, while immortality is not demonstrated, and thus is subject for faith, *it is most readily received always by those who hold fast to God and duty*.

Further argument based on the Biblical revelation need not be recited here. We turn, therefore,

to that which is peculiar to the New Church. Emanuel Swedenborg claims to have had as his special mission the work of restoring to the Church the true doctrine of the Lord; of the genuinely spiritual life, of the sanctity and the spiritual character of the Divine Word, and of the law of its composition, and the means of its interpretation; and, of special importance, as vitally connected with all these, he claims to have been enabled, from personal observation and experience, to speak with confidence and in detail of the life after death, whether in heaven or hell.

We venture, in conclusion, to summarise a portion of the doctrine of the hereafter as presented in his writings. Man is here for the formation of character, and a man's character is the love he acquires and makes his own. On dying he is immediately raised, and lives consciously the same man. Every faculty of his life remains with him, and every characteristic, good or evil, is at first present just as in this life. But in the greater freedom afforded by new conditions, his essential character, perhaps heretofore unknown to himself, manifests itself more and more as the accretions of habit and profession acquired here below fall away from him. As there are three distinct types of goodness possible to men, good men in the other

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life become manifest as the obedient to duty, as embodiments of charity, and those who are with the whole heart lovers of the Lord Himself. The law of heavenly society is that the like are near, the unlike remote, and thus there are three heavens (we call them natural, spiritual, and celestial), and in the grand aggregate Father's house there are many abodes. In heaven are all who love law, or the neighbour, or the Lord; and as love is the life of man and is essentially active and blessed, the bliss of heaven, in whatever form it is present to the consciousness, is directly related to a life of use and service. The character within is that which determines the abode, and the working of that character is the means whereby hereafter we have bliss or that sorrow, that eternal pruning (*κόλασις αἰώνιος*) of which the Lord speaks.

Men make for themselves their character, and determine thus their eternal homes, all sharing that tender mercy which is over all.

## ARTICLE VII.

BY THE REV. J. ROBINSON GREGORY.

THE writer of the opening paper in this Symposium has fared rather badly at the hands of the Rev. J. P. Hopps and Rabbi Adler. Each of them thinks that Prebendary Row has under-estimated the force of an argument for the immortality of man. It is a little curious that both these assailants accept less of the Christian creed than Prebendary Row himself. Rabbi Adler of course rejects the specifically Christian Scriptures; Mr. Hopps assigns to them, and to the Person they are chiefly concerned with, a lower degree of authority than the first writer. Convinced that the New Testament, or the revelation it contains, must be the main foundation of faith in man's immortality, Mr. Row depreciates other foundations, either to increase the value of the principal one or to encounter opponents upon the fairest possible terms. It is becoming fashionable for defenders of the Christian verities to carry concession to its utmost limits. If this is done

purely for the sake of apologetic argument, it is not only unobjectionable, but often highly expedient. But when these concessions are treated as intrinsically necessary or just, when the professed defender of the faith persuades himself, or allows himself to be persuaded, that no foundation is solid to rest upon except such as can be held in controversy, *upon his own terms*, with the materialist, or agnostic, or atheist, he exposes himself to well-merited rebuke from unexpected quarters. He may find that he has abandoned ground which men much less "orthodox" than himself know to be perfectly tenable. Nor is this the worst—he is in danger of yielding portions of the very truth for which he is bound to "contend earnestly."

Prebendary Row asserts, as we have been reminded more than once in this Symposium, that "nothing affords a stronger proof of the inability of reason alone to place the belief in a future state on a sure foundation than the position which it occupies in the Scriptures of the Old Testament;" and again, "The entire range of ancient thought prior to the Advent left the question whether a conscious existence remained for man after death entirely doubtful." Rabbi Adler directly traverses these statements. His exhibition of the indica-

tions in the Hebrew Scriptures that "the immortality of the soul formed an integral portion of Jewish belief from the most ancient times" rebuts the charge brought against the Old Testament so frequently and so carelessly. It would be easy to adduce further evidences which the Rabbi's limits would not allow him to cite. But though he may not solve every difficulty—he does not attempt this—he gives conclusive evidence that the Jews, during the period covered by the Old Testament, were not ignorant of the doctrine of a future life. This doctrine is not the only one which we find comparatively undeveloped in the Hebrew Scriptures, concerning which the New Testament affords greater certainty and wider knowledge. The Divine method suggested by the inspired phrase *πολυηρώς καὶ πολυτρόπως* (Heb. i. 1) applies to this doctrine. We may not deny to it a place in the Old Testament because it shines much more prominently and clearly in the New.

Upon this contention of Prebendary Row's Mr. Hopps asks, with excusable triumph, "What becomes of the 'revelation made to primeval man'?" Perhaps the implication of the inquiry is not borne out to its full extent by the words on which it is founded. Still, if such a primeval revelation ever existed, we should expect to discover at least traces

of it in the later and more formal revelation. To ignore these traces is to go a long way towards discrediting, if not towards denying, the later revelation. Believers in the organic unity of the Bible will be inclined to press strongly Mr. Hopps' tentative inquiry, "What becomes of the 'revelation' of the New Testament, when only a monument of 'the inability of reason' is found in the Old?" Mr. Row would probably complain of the insertion of the adverb, "only," but the real ground of complaint, in my judgment, is that he ascribes supposed omissions from the Old Testament to "the inability of reason alone" to supply them. Is the Old Testament the production of "reason alone"? Does it not possess any element of inspiration? "Inspired of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16), it seems, is merely a euphemistical synonym for wrought out by unaided human reason. Of course he does not mean this, but it is the irresistible inference from his words. If the facts were as he puts them, which they are not, the just deduction would not relate to the ability or inability of "reason alone," but to the Divine procedure as to gradual revelation.

Mr. Hopps takes Prebendary Row to task for denying that belief in immortality is an instinct or intuition. Here the dispute may turn upon exact



verbal definition. Substantially I think that the former is in the right. However man comes by the notion of a future life, he accepts it the moment it is presented to him—that is, he intuitively perceives it to be true. The instinct of a duck to swim will remain latent till it is called into operation by the sight of water. Our higher instincts may require some external stimulus to call them into activity, but they are none the less instincts for that. The Rev. C. Barlow well points out that every human being who now holds the doctrine has been taught it, and that the notion of immortality must have preceded belief of it. We are driven to ascribe the origin of the doctrine to revelation for sheer lack of any other plausible source. The failure of philosophy to account for it is patent; witness the grotesque speculations of Mr. Herbert Spencer and the utterly insufficient explanations of Mr. Frederic Harrison. Whatever the origin of the idea, its concord and accord with the deepest facts of our consciousness, the worthiest aspirations of our spirits, furnish strong presumptive evidence of its truth.

Nevertheless, I admit as freely as Prebendary Row that, apart from the Scriptures (including, however, both Testaments), the evidence for a future life is wholly unsatisfactory. But I do not

disparage the testimony from other than Biblical sources ; on the contrary, I attach a high value to it. These voices asserting our immortality are not weak in themselves, but we must fail to estimate their force, even to understand their language, without an interpreter. Some years ago, in the earlier numbers of the *Nineteenth Century*, there appeared an article on the subject which is occupying us now. This paper was from Mr. Frederic Harrison's pen. His keen and relentless logic pierced through and through the armour of those who tried to give a reason for the hope that was in them without supernatural revelation. The cause was not far to seek. Every natural argument in behalf of immortality assumes a postulate—the trustworthiness of our instincts, the intelligibility of Nature—in one word, the character of God. In his remarkable work, “The Unity of Nature,” the Duke of Argyll argues that the truthfulness of the correspondence between the mind of man and external facts, as far as we can trace them, guarantees the truthfulness of our higher instincts ; that correspondences exist answering to our moral and religious needs. The alternative is, that consciousness is a liar from the beginning ; that the universe is a vast system of disorder and deception. You cannot break

either horn of the dilemma; but what prevents our choosing the second? There is but one possible answer—FAITH. It may be faith in the intelligibility of the universe or in the veracity of my own instincts, but though the object of the faith may vary, I cannot get rid of the faith itself. If so, the natural object of faith is God. If Nature is intelligible, it is because its Author has made it so. If my instincts can be relied upon, it is because their Creator will not deceive me.

Mr. Hopps approaches startlingly close to this position. He calls "Nature and human nature" "two great witnesses for God." I should prefer to say that in Nature and human nature God Himself speaks; through them His very voice is heard. I do not suppose that Mr. Hopps would object to this emendation of his phraseology. I trust "Nature and human nature" because I trust the living God who made the heavens and the earth. I recognise His voice in Nature and human nature, chiefly because I have learnt to distinguish it through the Written Word. The utterances of Nature seem confused and contradictory, at all events uncertain, until I obtain the clue to their meaning from the Bible in Christianity. Read in the light of Holy Writ,

these external arguments for our immortality grow exceedingly luminous, and afford powerful confirmation of the principal witness.

Another weighty objection lies against the too easy dismissal of arguments drawn from extra-Biblical sources and from the Old Testament. Mr. Hopps reasons, "If those two great witnesses for God, Nature and human nature, are powerless to supply a foundation for belief in a future life, and if even the Old Testament, in addition, leaves us still in the dark, we are hazarding a tremendous stake in risking our faith upon a bare chance of a Christian revelation being the sole guide to a full assurance." Obviously the force of this contention depends upon the "if" with which it begins and the adjective "sole" with which it qualifies the claims of "a Christian revelation." If other revelations say nothing trustworthy about a future life, why should not this last deceive us? We may follow many harmonising lines which gain strength from each other when we fear to accept the lead of a solitary cry in a dark wilderness. It is not necessary to appraise the evidence for immortality apart from the Gospel, or that which would be furnished by the Gospel if it stood alone. Our question concerns the grounds of present faith. To him who accepts the revelation of Jesus Christ,

that must be the principal pillar of the truth. For his own personal satisfaction he may need to seek no further. Indeed, it is mainly that revelation which gives him that confidence in the character of God which renders other testimony worth heeding. If now we see life and immortality more clearly than did "our fathers," unto whom God spake by the prophets, it is due to the light cast by "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God," and not to any developments of human reason or discovery of human science. In this case it is not "by the progress of the suns" that "the thoughts of men" have been "widened" and established. As to the supreme importance of Christianity, every Christian must be in thorough agreement with Prebendary Row.

To the inquiry, then, What are the foundations of belief in man's immortality? the answer would be—the revelations of God to man, particularly that contained in the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but including that contained in the Old Testament, considerations furnished by natural religion, and the assertions or suggestions of our own consciousness. There does not seem to be much to add to this outline as frequently presented.

The third contribution to this Symposium de-

votes itself to the exposition of the arguments for man's immortality that can be divorced, more or less completely, from Christianity, and to criticising those resting upon the revelation by Jesus Christ. The latter element in the paper of the Unitarian demands notice. He objects to the notion of a revelation to primeval man handed down by tradition; that "it is almost too late in the day to talk about primeval man as the recipient of a message from the angelic spheres. He began at the other end; and Eden and the angels and 'the secret of the Lord' are all before him. He is not a fallen but a rising creature." In many ears these sentences must sound slightly supercilious. To dismiss the Biblical doctrine of the Fall with a quiet wave of the hand, as though the age had outgrown it, is to treat with contempt the creed of large numbers of men of intelligence and culture. Even Science has not yet cast it off as a thing dubious, much less disproven. A recent example will occur to most people. The Duke of Argyll is at least familiar with the latest scientific and philosophic researches, but he actually contends at length for the degradation of man; and the reasons he alleges for his opinion have not yet been redargued. The antithesis of the closing sentence shows how loosely its author must have thought on the subject.

“Man is not a fallen but a rising creature,” as though the undisputed fact that he is rising helps a feather’s weight towards demonstrating that he has not fallen. May he not be rising from the depth into which he fell?

The words “the bare chance of a Christian revelation being the sole guide to a full assurance” have already been cited. They are used hypothetically, and probably for a purely controversial purpose, but it is scarcely superfluous to remark that voluntarily and knowingly the Christian stakes nothing upon “the bare chance” of the truth of the revelation by Jesus Christ; he relies upon that which possesses for him the highest degree of certitude.

Mr. Hopps says, “One of the most remarkable things is, that when the evidence of ‘the Christian revelation’ is offered, that which is most relied upon is the resurrection of Jesus; and what is nearly always meant by His resurrection is the resurrection of the body. But this is every year losing its efficacy as a ground of belief, and for two reasons—first, because we cannot help feeling more and more that the exceptional resurrection of a body 1800 years ago, so far from suggesting any hope of immortality, rather suggests the reverse, for we know that our dead do not rise, and

multitudes, whose number is ever increasing, add—And we think they never will ; but second, because we are now coming to a clearer conception of spirit-life, apart altogether from the life or animation of the body.” By “the evidence of ‘the Christian revelation’ ” I presume evidence in favour of man’s immortality is meant. But the resurrection of our Lord is not employed as an isolated fact on which to base the hope of immortality, nor is it, thus regarded, the principal contribution of the Christian revelation to the evidence. The resurrection of Christ, as His crowning miracle, authenticates, in a very special way, His declarations concerning Himself and the purposes of the Father. His announcements and promises lie at the foundation of our confidence in a future life. The resurrection of our Lord appears to us the appropriate, the natural, consummation of His earthly life and sacrificial death. It seems reasonable that if Jesus Christ was the Divine Son of God He should vouchsafe proof that man and death had no real power over His body, so reasonable that without the resurrection the disciples might well have continued perpetually in the despair which overtook them at the crucifixion and burial. The pangs of death were loosed because it was not possible that He should be holden of it



(Acts ii. 24). We are not taught that life and immortality (*ἀφθαρσία*) were brought to light by the resurrection, but "through the Gospel," of which the resurrection forms an essential element indeed, but is not the whole.

The resurrection of our Lord affords the main guarantee of the resurrection of our bodies. So "exceptional" a resurrection as that of the Second Adam, no matter how many centuries ago, may keep up our faith in that, spite of the fact that the unnumbered dead have not yet risen, and this simply because we have been told distinctly that the dead are to be raised at a day that is still future.

In thought there is, of course, no indissoluble connection between immortality and the resurrection of the body, i.e., the former may exist without the latter. In his exhibition of what he deems the Pauline doctrine of the resurrection Mr. Hopps has, therefore, started a side issue. There is no need to follow him very closely. But the attempt to force St. Paul into teaching immortality as distinct from, and even opposed to, a physical resurrection, as the actual issue of events, can result only in conspicuous failure. "How plain it is that with him," Mr. Hopps ejaculates, "the resurrection was not the resurrection of the body,

but resurrection out of the body!" How plain it is, on the contrary, that the Apostle neither wrote nor intended anything of the sort! And so far from speaking of the resurrection as "no postponed event," as "the natural gliding, one by one, of liberated souls behind the veil," he asserts the precise opposite. He fixes the raising of the dead for a particular period, after which there shall be no more dead to be raised: "at the last trump." This general resurrection can only be physical, as the Unitarian writer practically admits when he talks of souls being liberated one by one. St. Paul refers to burial as sowing, and declares "it" shall be raised; the "it" must be something which the grave has holden. But he frees himself and us from the gross misconceptions Mr. Hopps animadverts upon by declaring, "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, . . . but God giveth it a body." And with *this* resurrection St. Paul closely conjoins the putting on of "incorruption" and "immortality." The doctrine of the spiritual body harmonises as well with the true doctrine of a physical resurrection as it does with the fancy of a resurrection "*out of the body.*" And there is not one of the glorious aspirations the Apostle cherished which does not consort as readily and intimately with

the former as with the latter. It would be a work of supererogation to urge that the Bible persistently regards man as a compound being—"body, soul, and spirit"—that, in the view of the sacred writers, the body is essential to his being. And here again there is nothing discordant with the idea of the present existence of the spiritual body, or with any etherealisation of the tabernacle we now inhabit. The distinction must not be overlooked between the resurrection of the body and the resurrection of the flesh.

Another disparagement to Christianity is that it has not produced certainty concerning the future life. "But *has* it given certainty? Has it even given certainty to Christendom?" Mr. Hopps inquires. One might retort that the arguments upon which the interrogator prefers to rely have not given certainty either. There are enormously more to whom they seem insufficient than there are to whom Christianity fails to carry conviction. It is too often forgotten, however, that the Gospel does not profess to provide mathematical demonstration of immortality. It will effect assurances of a future life only upon its own terms. The Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16); "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the

teaching whether it be of God" (John vii. 17). This principle is of very wide application. I am far from hinting that the evidences of Christianity, patiently and candidly pondered, are inadequate to produce intellectual conviction. But to him who has tested the revelation of Jesus Christ by its own methods there comes an assurance which no argument or difficulty can shake. If we "know that" we "have eternal life" (1 John v. 13), if, having the Son, we have the life, we have reached a rock of certainty which no doubt can cause to tremble. All this may be stigmatised as mystical, but it is the mysticism of St. John, and of St. Paul too—and of a greater than either, the common Master of them both. This *πληροφία τῆς ἐλπίδος, πίστεως* (Heb. vi. 11; x. 22; comp. Col. ii. 2), or, more precisely, the influence whence it issues, has at least as good a right to be mentioned among the foundations of our belief in immortality as spiritualistic manifestations, the genuineness of which is not yet established, the causes of which are not yet ascertained, but which are acknowledged to be "tainted by fraud and embarrassed by folly."

Hitherto man's existence after death and his immortality have, with a verbal exception or two, been treated as identical. Professor Stokes separates the two. He also brings into prominence the

question of the ultimate destiny of the wicked, whereas previous writers have looked at the subject under discussion almost entirely upon the bright side of it. Professor Stokes, as is well known, is an adherent of the theory of *Conditional Immortality*, and contributed a commendatory letter to the third edition of Mr. Edward White's "Life in Christ." It is plainly impossible within the limits of this Symposium to examine the theory referred to. The theory necessitates the rejection of every argument for immortality except the promise of God to them that have believed on Christ. Let us see how it affects the evidence as set forth by a disciple of it, and how that evidence, in its turn, affects it.

So far as the physical argument leads to any positive result, it suggests the possibility of survival after death. That survival must be natural. Physical science cannot point to the probability of any miraculous prolongation of existence. If you declare the testimony of science to be "purely negative," it makes no difference whether immortality is absolute or conditional.

Most theologians, now-a-days, pronounce the metaphysical or philosophical argument worthless. Indubitably it is the weakest of all the arguments commonly adduced. Regarded in the light of

revelation, it might possibly be so stated as to help us to understand the reason of our survival of death. At any rate, its weight, be it ever so trifling, must be cast against the Conditionalist theory.

Professor Stokes thinks the teleological argument depends, in the main, upon the acceptance of some theory of evolution. There would seem, however, to be some little inconsistency in the position he takes up. In one paragraph he objects to evolution, "if by evolution be meant the sequence of cause and effects irrespective of intelligence;" in the next the validity of the argument is said to rest upon "such a modification of evolution as would not wholly exclude design." Of course no teleological reasoning is possible without admitting design. Hence those who "lean on an argument of this kind" can scarcely "be those more especially who push to the utmost the theory of evolution." But if once you acknowledge the presence of design, the final cause is as recognisable whether you judge that the designer has evolved that which he first involved, or that he has proceeded by acts of creation or other modes of direct interference. On either scheme he would not have bestowed instincts or intuitions, for example, which are altogether destitute of significance.

At this point we are met by the Scriptural

doctrine of the Fall. Man is not now in his "natural condition," and "we have clearly no right to assume that man's destiny, in his fallen state, corresponds with aspirations which may have been implanted in his natural, *i.e.*, unfallen, condition." If we had to deal with aspirations alone, there might be some force in this. In that case we should still find teleological instruction in the "aspirations." They would have been suffered to continue in order to remind us of the condition from which we had lapsed. We cannot conceive a just, much less a benevolent, Creator preserving them to us solely for such a cruel purpose as this. The Conditionalist believes that they indicate glorious possibilities for the future. They form, then, even upon Professor Stokes' own showing, one of the foundations of our belief in the immortality of the good. The teleological argument, therefore, is not destroyed by the Fall.

Moreover, we must lay our account with facts of the general consciousness very different from mere "aspirations." Following the lead of John Stuart Mill and the example of Conditionalist advocates of all calibres, Professor Stokes contends "the desire of immortality no more proves that a man will be immortal than the desire of happiness proves that he will be happy." *Quis*

*dubitat?* We may admit this plea unhesitatingly, and yet leave the question exactly where we found it. The argument from desire must not be confused with the argument from conviction. The evil man looks with horror into the future as truly as the good looks into it with hope. How many would accept gladly the dogma that man dieth as the beasts die, but their convictions rebel against it in spite of their desires! The general normal human consciousness refuses to admit, as it is unable to conceive, its own cessation of being. Gray's verse, however poetically beautiful, is untrue to the actual experience of the immense majority of the dying—

“For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?”

His last line describes but one part of the feeling produced by the immediate prospect of death. The backward look is there, but no less the forward.

The Conditionalist is compelled to acknowledge the validity of these apprehensions as well as the corresponding forecasts. The aforesaid mental phenomena may indicate nothing more than survival after death; perhaps, in strict logic, that is



all that they do indicate. But survival after the only death we know carries with it the probability, the presumption, of survival after any and every death.

We may fairly conclude, I think, that there is nothing in the extra-Biblical evidence in favour of immortality that assists the specific theory of conditional immortality, nothing that does not consist, at least as amicably, with the ordinary doctrine. And the Conditionalist is further hampered by the existence of the almost or altogether universal belief in the immortality of the soul. He cannot account for it, as the mere philosopher imagines he can, by means of uninspired mental processes. He scouts every philosophic plea on its behalf. That philosophy which reasons so weakly in its support can scarcely have invented so grand and powerful a conception.

To do it justice, the doctrine of life in Christ only—i.e., endless existence in Christ only—appeals directly and nearly exclusively to the Holy Writ. Professor Stokes adduces two of the conclusions of its exegesis. First, the promise of eternal life includes everlasting existence. A statement two lines in length may require many pages to refute. Suffice it, therefore, to say now that believers in the ordinary doctrine of immor-

tality cannot allow that, in the Biblical denotation of the term, "life" is synonymous with conscious existence—else, to cite but a single difficulty, our Lord's statement that the Jews who ate not His flesh and drank not His blood would mean that they had no conscious existence in themselves (John vi. 53).

The other point asserted by the Professor is, that St. Paul connects our immortality with the resurrection of the body, a confessedly supernatural event. Even so, the wicked are raised as well as the good. These utterances of the Apostle should be read remembering that they constitute a reply to those who denied the possibility of a physical resurrection, and in particular the resurrection of our Lord. By his original constitution death to man was unnatural; if the body is an essential part of man, it must be delivered from the grave by supernatural means. All this may be admitted without necessitating the conclusion that the survival of the soul is supernatural in the same sense as is the revival of the body. And this fact amply suffices for our present purpose.

"The tremendous ethical difficulties" associated with the doctrine of eternal punishment\* hardly

\* Rabbi Adler states that "the eternity of Divine punishment is not a Jewish doctrine;" nor is Annihilationism or Universalism;

come within the range of our discussion, which relates to the basis of our belief in our immortality rather than to the consequences of it. Ethical difficulties are utterly out of place when the question is one of exegesis, as the Conditionalist emphatically proclaims it is. But Conditionalism has its peculiar moral problems, *e.g.*, that of the miraculous preservation of the spirits of the ungodly for the sole purpose of paying a penalty. Relief from those of eternal punishment may be sought in the direction suggested by our Lord's words about "many" and "few stripes," and in others. Before the insoluble ethical difficulty of the origin and permission of evil all the rest sink into insignificance. Yet evil and pain do exist. If I can discover nothing which helps, if ever so little, to enlighten the awful mystery how a God, infinitely benevolent and infinitely powerful, could create a being that should suffer even a solitary pang, I am not likely to fathom the inscrutable depths of future retribution.

The brief summary given of the tenets of the New Church as to a future state suggests mere speculations in which some minds may find relief from insupportable burdens, speculations as to possible

yet all three have been held by distinguished rabbis, as all three are held at this day by Christians.

methods of Divine procedure in the world to come. While we may not be able to admit Swedenborg's "claims to have been enabled, from personal experience, to speak with confidence and in detail of the life after death, whether in heaven or hell," we may recognise in him an original and stimulating thinker, some of whose principles are susceptible of a different application from that which he gives to them.

## ARTICLE VIII.

BY THE REV. CANON W. J. KNOX LITTLE, M.A.

THERE are some great thoughts and some imperial words which, in one form or another, are the property of man *as* man. They haunt the chambers of his brain, kindle the affections of his heart, *energise* within his life as motives of conduct, are sources of consolation or vehicles of fear : such is—Immortality. It is so great a thought, so powerful, so persistent a belief, that it must have its foundation laid somehow, somewhere, deep in human nature. The fact appears to be, the belief in the immortality of man rests (1) on what may be called a *moral intuition*, and (2) on that intuition reinforced and rendered definite by more or less direct *revelation*. It is, in the first place, doubtless, an endowment of the human soul, the result of the action of the Eternal Word—the Second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity—"the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

I. This statement is supported by a considera-

tion of the extremely laboured, unsatisfactory, and artificial character of the arguments usually brought forward on the other side.

1. These arguments move upon a wrong plane. It is assumed that if the doctrine were true the Creator of man would not permit man to have any doubt upon the subject; man's knowledge would be absolute; he would have knowledge of it, in fact, in a scientific sense. Now if this were so, knowledge of anything and everything is impossible, not only in religion, but in every department of truth. Man is furnished with grounds, indeed, for belief, but he is far from being excluded from the possibility of doubt; if he were, one part of his probation, one mode of the training of his character, one element in his freedom, would be gone. So in this, as in all matters of moral conduct, man rests upon belief, not knowledge—a belief which, if he does himself justice, may be possessed in the highest degree: he may carry in his mind at least as strong a conviction as that which supports him in the common actions and relations of daily life. Now, to say that had the doctrine been true no doubt of it would have been permitted, that is, that it would have been absolutely self-evident, or capable of incontrovertible, demonstrative proof, would be to expect it to be

discredited because the Creator dealt with His creatures in *this* matter according to the usual laws of Divine government in *others*. If the grounds of belief are *intuitive*, the belief *may* amount to a practical certainty, but never can admit of scientific demonstration of a kind under all circumstances to compel assent.

2. But, again, the strength of the attack has always lain in the assumed truth of psychologic materialism.

"When mighty time at length destroys the body," says Lucretius in his tone of majestic despair, "when the members fail with their powers exhausted, the mind fails also;" and Feuerbach, in the harder temper of modern materialism, declares "the body in its totality is my very being;" and again, "the contract of body and soul is logically untenable."

According to this philosophy, what we call mind is only matter in activity: "the soul is a collective term for the sum total of nervous processes," or "not a substance *per se*, but the name of a bundle of attributes, the attributes of feeling, thinking, reasoning, believing, &c." Hence, of course, thought is only action of the brain, only "matter in motion," and consciousness is but a property of matter, and "the human being is the sum total of

parents, nurse, place, time, air, water, sound, light, food, and clothing." Now it is, of course, true that there are correspondences between the bodily frame and the thinking mind, that injury to the brain seems to us to disturb or paralyse the action of the mind, but it does not follow, as it is argued, that brain and soul are only names for different states of the same thing, and that therefore the dissolution of the one means the complete destruction of the other.

For (1.) it has been justly argued that if mind and matter are really the same thing, then all thought would arise from sensuous impression. But this is not the case, for man has purely intellectual ideas; and thus the moment he passes to the contemplation of a world beyond the sphere of sense, he is not in distinct light, but he is not in outer darkness, as he would be if he depended for thought wholly on the senses. He is able, indistinctly indeed, but still he *is* able to apprehend in some degree such ideas as Spirit and Infinity and Time—ideas luminous and effective, though insufficiently grasped, and entirely independent of the perceptions of sense.

(2.) If such a view were true, if the soul be only a becoming furniture of the organism of the body, then, it has been truly answered, in this case all



thought is *necessary*, and to change one's mind is impossible, for that would imply the necessity of altering the structure of one's brain. This is, of course, evidently absurd; all mankind, by recognising argumentative discussion as a means of modifying or changing opinion, witness that mind and soul, within certain limits, are independent of the texture of the brain.

(3.) And it has been pertinently observed that those who so tie up soul and body together as to deny the continued existence of one after the dissolution of the other "should remember that the uniform coexistence of one fact with another does not make the one fact a part of the other, or the same with it;" and the same writer adds, "There is in science no evidence against the immortality of the soul but that negative evidence which consists in the absence of (scientific) evidence in its favour."

In a word, the belief in immortality is, so to say, *in possession*. So strong and so strange is it, that, to attack it, (1) recourse must be had to a demand for evidence of a kind which, from the nature of the case, is inadmissible, viz., for scientific proof; and whilst this evidence cannot, of course, be adduced *for* it, it also cannot be adduced *against*; or (2) it must be assailed by assumptions

of psychological materialism, which are capable of being reduced *ad absurdum* and are contrary to acknowledged facts of mental experience. This at least furnishes a strong presumption that such a belief is an intuition, and has the very elements of its testimony *in* the human soul.

II. Now, of course, if such a presumption is to gain strength—if, indeed, there be intuitive belief in immortality—this “inner sense” will be witnessed to something like universally by man. That such is the case can scarcely be questioned.

πάντες δὲ θεῶν κατέουσ' ἀνθρώποι.

“All men are craving for the gods” is a statement of a wide fact: this fact, of course, in its literal and detailed application is denied. But such denial is beside the mark. It is, of course, impossible to *prove* that *every human being* who ever lived had a conscious sense of immortality; but truly it is equally impossible to deny that, speaking broadly, mankind has had a conviction, mysterious, startling—usually more vivid as moral forces were more active in the life—that he, so wonderful and gifted a being, does not find his ending in the grave.

The great reverence paid to the spirits of the

departed, so commonly found amongst heathen nations of antiquity and amongst religious but uncivilised man at the present day, is an incontrovertible fact in evidence.

The testimony is clear in the region of literature. The Greek and Roman mythologies represent another world of the living dead. It is just what we should expect from an intuition clouded by moral failure and wanting the light of revelation. It is dim and shadowy, airy and attenuated; like Casella and Dante, so the father and son in Greek fable meet and embrace, only to find the unsubstantial character of the dead. Dreamy, thin, vanishing are the shades, still there they are. Whether we remember the "doleful gloom" of Homer or the spiritualised desires of the Phædo, or Cicero's holy hope or holy despair in contemplating the position after death of "one loved and lost," we have still man haunted by thoughts of immortality; and thoughts so glorious, so difficult to imagination, so apparently contradicted by the gloom, by the conditions of the grave; thoughts too great, too beautiful, for a merely dying creature, for a mere mass of animated corruption, to *invent*; thoughts too striking, too operative, too universal to be ignored. Whence came they?

*Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* Mankind as

*a whole* has insisted on the truth of immortality. What but a Divine intuition can account, with approximate probability, for such a fact?

It has, indeed, been argued that "if we accept . . . the general belief of the human race . . . as a guide, we must accept it entire,"—and it is inferred that, as the doctrine of "ghosts" is untrue, so may be that of immortality. Can any argument be more devoid of cogency? (*a*) Why must we accept it? Why should it be illogical to receive with proper respect a general, a universal belief, and yet not give the same weight to an imaginative application of the doctrine in detail? This *application of the doctrine* in the form of "ghost stories" is very variable, and is frequently an illustration of human effort to realise, often grotesquely, some Divine truth, and so all the greater proof of that truth. And then (*β*) is it certain that the accounts of "ghosts" and "apparitions" *are* altogether false? There may not be, indeed, indubitable evidence that they are true, but no more is there evidence that they are *not* true; and with a class of minds which accepts it as axiomatic that supernatural appearances *cannot* be true it would be waste of time to argue. In no case can the (sometimes grotesque) *applications* of the doctrine of immortality in regard to "ghosts" be consi-

dered a serious difficulty in accepting the *vox populi* of mankind on the great truth itself.

III. And then this appears to be one of those deep truths which man cannot quite account for, but which are there. This is clear from a consideration of some of those wonderful yet common feelings, senses, desires, sayings, so deep, so general, in which man gives some sort of expression to his essential convictions.

a. For instance, how general, how saddening, how full of hope, is the sense of *the fact of undeveloped souls*! Men feel that a Dante, a Raffaele, a Phidias, a Beethoven, have not done all on earth that is in them to do; much more that in the Art of Goodness,—higher and more moving than painting or song,—there are in multitudes of souls capacities for which time has found next to no employment. There is an instinctive sense in mankind that these are not for nothing—

“ Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act,  
Fancies which broke through language and escaped ;  
All I could never be,  
All men ignored in me,  
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.”

There is—who can deny?—a sense of ruin and yet of dignity in man. It finds its expression in

such words as "progress," "improvement;" in such brave phrases as "never say die." It is easy for a dried-up heart or a materialised mind to say this is no *proof*; but none the less it is just what would be found in a being with a present of perplexity who had an intuition of immortality beyond. In fact, if you can make your boy believe that the *reason* for giving him a good education is to render his life ineffective or to bring it to a close, then you may make mankind as a whole believe that this world is their entire platform of opportunity, that life is bounded by the grave.

β. Again, how has mankind treated *the higher affections*? Certainly in that love that lightens life—the love of those dear objects of human tenderness which supply the substantial amid the shadows—in love, in friendship, the heart of man necessarily and instinctively acts on the hypothesis of Eternity. It is impossible in this region of life to fix a frontier or determine a boundary. No one ever dreams of assigning a date up to which affection shall be operative and after which it shall cease. "Love is love for evermore."

γ. We may notice, again, *the hunger for justice*. How inadequately this is satisfied in this world all must feel. Now, if there be a God at all, it is fitting that it should be satisfied; if there *be* a God,

since there *is* a God, justice must be part of His entire administration of things. In *this* part of His administration it is confessedly not obtained; this yearning is looking for immortality.

It is said, indeed, that no more does a demand for justice prove a supply than the hunger of a starving man proves that food will be forthcoming; but (1) analogies do not go "on all fours;" the cogency of a moral claim is felt, after all, to be higher, and in a higher region, than that of a physical; and (2) at least if "that unprovoked, unjustifiable predicate of God" which has wandered into the human mind is allowed for, it is felt, we may repeat—felt by the laws of our moral constitution, that withholding food from a limited life may be finally beneficial, and subserve, as immediate suffering often does, a higher purpose, but withholding, in the long run, what is just never can.

δ. So take, again, *the mystery of memory*. This, at any rate, can act, and with overwhelming force too, without any necessary activity of the senses in the present, and—as Bishop Butler argues—it so links together past and present (in a mind, it may be added, where every material particle of the brain may have been changed) as to create that deep sense of personal identity—in its inner seat to a great extent independent of the body—which

gives a strong presumption of continuance, that is, of immortality.

ε. There is, further, *the extraordinary clinging to the idea of immortality* which marks the mode of thought of those who have most vigorously denied the doctrine. The professed *materialist* rejoices in the immortality of matter and the imperishable character of every atom in his body, though he professes to suppose *himself* to cease to be. The *pantheist* sees his soul merged in the abyss of life, as a stream finds its end in the ocean, closes his eyes to the necessary confusion of good with evil in such a system, and the degradation of the idea of a God—part and parcel (according to such a theory) not only of goodness, but also of moral corruption,—but he is to have an *immortality himself* of this impersonal character; and the *teachers who advocate various shades of "subjective immortality"* cling still to the great idea; indeed, all of them, by their very substitution of unsubstantial, unsatisfying dreams for the glorious reality, still bear their witness to the imperishable nature of that intuition of his dignity and destiny in the mind of man.

ζ. It may also be doubted whether the human mind is really capable of conceiving—certainly it is not capable of imagining—its own reduction to



nothingness. In the indestructible sense of present, *personal* life there seems to be the whisper of an intuition that *that* personal life cannot be divided, or impaired, or reduced to nothing.

Such considerations seem to make more vivid that force of universal testimony which is only explicable on the hypothesis that man has been gifted with an *intuitive* sense of immortality—more or less clear and active according to his greater or less degree of fidelity to moral light and truth.

IV. But while the foundation is laid in the souls of mankind as an *intuition*—the gift of the Eternal Word—of the “Light that lighteth every man,” it is strengthened and rendered more abiding by *revelation* more or less definite and distinct.

1. The primitive revelation to the early ancestors of the human family, the promise of the “seed of the woman” to conquer evil, *involved* immortality.

The Patriarchs saw the same truth, though still dimly. Abraham, seeing it, rejoiced in a promise which without it was a mockery; Jacob, learning it, passed through life as a “stranger and pilgrim,” seeking “a better country;” the Psalmists sang it in innumerable songs of penitence and trial and praise; the Book of Job moves on the assumption,

on the part of the chief figure in it, of the truth of unending life; Daniel, among the prophets, foretells, in plain terms, a literal resurrection.

There are, it is true, a number of sayings, such as "The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence," which are commonly adduced to prove that immortality was no article in the creed of the Jewish Church; but it has been rightly answered—(1.) when examined, it will be found that they are only intended to "describe the phenomenon of death *as it presents itself to our eyes*," and that they do not enter at all "into the question of the reality which takes place under it;" and (2.) just as the intuition perceived by "every man that cometh into the world" found its expression among the nations in guesses and speculations of more or less accuracy, according to the power and purity of the moral atmosphere around, so the revelation to ancient Israel was still *a revelation in twilight*, and altogether excluded a consideration of the depressing phenomena of the visible world. It was enough, however, to leave a solemn sense on pious minds of another world.

2. The moral law taught man his dignity and his insufficiency; the revelation of God in His majestic unity brought to his mind vividly the

fact of a spiritual and eternal world with which—as he bent in awe and penitence before God, clinging to Him as his governing thought and chief support—he could not but associate himself.

3. But it remained for the Eternal Word, when He took flesh, in the mystery of the Incarnation, to bring the truth which He had taught mankind by the light He gave them,—which He had taught ancient Israel by law and prophets,—it remained for Him, in the mystery of His humiliation, to bring this majestic truth into clear “light by the Gospel.” The infallible authority of Jesus Christ, true God and man, has guaranteed to His people for ever this glorious truth. The Eternal Word—the Revealer of the Father by the agency of the Holy Ghost—has brought into the clearness of distinct and definite revelation what was once only dimly and indistinctly known.

Our Lord revealed it *by His example*, by the manner in which He subordinated the claims of this present world to the thought of a life beyond ; He revealed it by the whole *tenor of His teaching*, the precepts of which require for their adequate fulfilment a life beyond the narrow boundary of time ; He revealed it *by direct statement*—“ God is not the God of the dead, but of the living ;” the

“many mansions;” “Abraham’s bosom;” the “coming again;” the “shining forth” of the righteous in their Father’s kingdom;—He revealed it,—and guaranteed the truth of His Godhead, and therefore His right to reveal,—by the stupendous miracle of the resurrection; He carried on His revelation by His ascension into glory and by the coming of the Holy Ghost.

The Apostles one and all taught what He had revealed, and now “the Holy Church throughout all the world,” however externally divided through human frailties, still as God’s family proclaims with one living voice, in the Catholic Creeds, “I believe in the resurrection of the body, the life everlasting,—the life of the world to come.”

This, then, is the foundation of belief in the immortality of man. To mankind at large it rests on that universal teaching of God to His creature which may be called *intuition*; to this, for the chosen people, was added the *revelation* of God in His unity, and man in his dignity and his sorrow, in his need of and nearness to God implied in the moral law; to this has succeeded *the full revelation* of Christ to His Church, to be proclaimed throughout the world—the distinct and definite declaration of eternal life. To all the

word is spoken, softer or more clearly, which proclaims the immortality of man—

“The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o’er man’s immortality ;  
Another race is run, and other palms are won.”

But the “sober colouring” becomes a golden glory to the eye of faith fixed on the revelation of the Incarnate God ; and the Christian’s voice can rise with the strength of certainty in the triumphant cry of the great Apostle, “O Death ! where is thy sting ! O Grave ! where is thy victory ”

## ARTICLE IX.

BY THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP WEATHERS.

THE immortality of the spiritual part of man's nature lifts him up above all other creatures that are upon the face of the earth. It redeems his present life from the charge, so often urged against it, of excessive dulness, monotony, and meanness. It redresses the great inequalities that are to be met with everywhere in this world; for if we see some abounding in wealth whilst others languish in sickness and want—if we are struck by the same apparent anomalies existing in the dispensation of the gifts of mind as in the distribution of the goods of fortune—to all this it is a sufficient answer to say that this life is but the prelude to another, where man will find himself in a permanent state of existence, which will be, in all its circumstances, that which he himself has made it by his conduct here. But if man is thus constituted the arbiter of his own future destiny, he must not conceal from himself the fact that this crowning glory of his nature, its immortality,

throws upon him an immense responsibility. We are asked what are the foundations of this belief in man's immortality. They may be considered under the threefold division of Tradition, Revelation, and Reason. Tradition is the great proof upon which, more than upon any other, the belief in man's immortality rested in the ancient world, and upon which it rests even now in those countries which have not yet come to the knowledge of revelation; whilst those, on the other hand, who have received the faith, take their stand upon the infallible truth of the Word of God. Reason addresses itself alike to those who believe in revelation and those who do not, but it does not speak with the clearness and with the weight of authority which belong to tradition and revelation.

I. Prebendary Row, in a remarkable article, writes as follows:—"If we view this subject on mere *a priori* principles, we might almost take it for granted that if it were the purpose of man's Creator to call him into judgment hereafter for his conduct here, He would have made his belief in a future state of retribution one of his primary certainties—as certain, in fact, as those certainties which form our practical guides in life. Yet this

is precisely what God has not done, but has left it to be inferred by a set of inferences more or less doubtful."

Now it is one thing to say that in the ancient world the great majority of men were without any certain knowledge of the truth in question, because to say this is not to deny that their ignorance might be, to a great extent, imputable to themselves. The writer admits that, though the number of believers is at the present day very large, yet in regard to the majority of them the practical influence of their belief is extremely small. But it is a very different thing to affirm that in the ancient world the belief in a future state rested on evidence which was comparatively weak, and that the truth of it had to be inferred by a set of inferences more or less doubtful. Without faith, we know, it is impossible to please God. "For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek Him." Therefore, to affirm that, without any fault of their own, men had it not at that time in their power to attain to any certain knowledge of God as their Creator and Remunerator is tantamount to saying that God does not desire the salvation of all men, and that the merits of Christ's death were not made applicable



alike to those who preceded and to those who have lived after the time of His coming.

There is, however, another view that may be taken of this subject, which is more consistent with what we know of God's goodness, and more in conformity with the dictates of reason. So long as man continued in the state of innocence and retained the grace with which his nature had been endowed, he was privileged to discern the presence of his Maker under visible signs (Gen. iii. 8). The certainty he then had of things relating to the spiritual world, *e.g.*, of the immortality of the soul, was, we have reason to believe, like those certainties which form our practical guides in life. Of this inward consciousness which man had of his immortality the tempter took advantage to give some colour of plausibility, some semblance of truth, to the deceitful words addressed to Eve (Gen. iii. 4). But man is no longer what he once was by God's grace. In the state in which he is, he has no immediate or direct knowledge of things belonging to the spiritual order. Yet it is not true to say that he is now, or that he ever has been, left without means of attaining to that knowledge which is declared by the Apostle to be necessary to salvation. There have been philosophers, in past times

as in the present, who have taught that there is no God, and that the soul of man perishes with the body. They have had a certain following. But this has not been the belief of the people at any time. It is not the belief of the people now. To confine ourselves to the particular point under discussion, the people have always believed, implicitly at least, in man's immortality, inasmuch as they have always believed in his continuance in life after the death of the body, without setting any limit whatever to the duration of that life. And without any authority from above, without any information being brought to them from the other side of the grave, how could they pretend to do so? But where is the proof of the statement just made concerning the belief of the people in a future state? Out of the many testimonies which might be cited let the following suffice:—Cicero, who, as a philosopher, argues sometimes in favour of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and sometimes against it, uniformly bears witness to the fact of the universal existence of this belief among all nations (*Quæst. Tusc. l. 19, De Legibus, i. 16*). Seneca writes, "In discussing the immortality of the soul, the consensus amongst men on this point weighs much with me" (*Ep. 118*). Celsus, as quoted by Origen (*contra Celsum*,

lib. 8), says, "Christians do well to hold that the virtuous will be recompensed after death, and the wicked undergo eternal punishment, for this is the common belief of the whole world." Bayle, the encyclopedist, writes (Diction. art. Spinoza), "All religions, true as well as false, rest upon the belief that there is an unseen Judge who will punish or reward men after death for what they have done in secret as well as in public." It has been asserted, indeed, that some of the Eastern nations, and notably the Chinese, have been, in their earliest period, materialistic and atheistic. But the eminent Orientalist Charles de Harlez (vid. *Dublin Review*, July 1884, art. "Primitive Religion of China") has examined this question, and has clearly shown, from the historical portion of the writings of Confucius and from the oldest annalists, that the primitive religion of the Chinese was more pure than that of any nation outside Judea. We may conclude, then, in the words of the Rev. Garrett Horder, that the people or tribe has yet to be discovered which has no belief in a future existence.

How, then, has this all but universal belief in man's continued existence beyond the grave originated? Not by arguments drawn from reason. It is admitted that, for the most part, the argu-

ments of the ancient philosophers in support of this doctrine are weak and inconclusive, whereas we find the simplest amongst the people most deeply imbued with the belief of this doctrine. Not from any collusion amongst men. Nations cannot be made parties to such practices of deceit. Nor by revelation. Revelations bearing on this point may have been vouchsafed to individuals (*e.g.*, Balaam, Numbers xxii.), but to no other nation except the people of God, under the Old and under the New Law, has God spoken by His accredited messengers. The only way in which we can account for this belief, the traces of which we find more and more distinct the farther we go back in the world's history, is by supposing it to have originated in a primitive revelation made to man before his dispersion over the globe—a revelation which finds a response in the deepest instincts of our nature. But how can a tradition be looked upon as Divine in its origin and character which is everywhere mixed up with the grossest errors and the most degrading superstitions? For among Eastern nations it finds expression in the doctrine of the transmigration of the souls of men into the bodies of animals. Among the Greeks and Romans, the manes, or departed spirits, were recognised indeed as living, but were

regarded as living a sort of phantom existence ; whilst many barbarous nations imagined the deceased to be still following the same pursuits which occupied them on earth, to be still engaged in war or the chase. The answer to this question is obvious. Those superstitions were not the same amongst different people. This shows that they formed no part of a primeval tradition, whereas the belief underlying these superstitions was everywhere one and the same, and possessed, in its universality, the stamp of Divine truth impressed upon it. The same may be said of the belief in the existence of God in the ancient world. It was everywhere disfigured with monstrous errors ; but the errors were everywhere different ; the belief underlying them one and the same. Tertullian hesitates not to say that the soul of man is naturally Christian. Formed by nature for the reception of truth, the soul, so far as it is free from prejudice and passion, cannot help being attracted to the truth which exists in the Christian religion. And in like manner those in the ancient world that were upright and simple must have felt drawn to the great primary truths of natural religion, and impelled, at the same time, to reject the errors that were mixed up with a belief in them. Now it cannot be doubted

that there were many such souls. When Elias called on God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they have slain Thy prophets, they have dug down Thy altars, and I am left alone," the Divine answer made to him was, "I have yet left to me seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal." St. Peter tells us that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh justice is acceptable to Him." And Jesus, moved by the humble confidence of a Gentile believer, declared that "He had not found so great faith in Israel." It should be noted that that tradition which existed in the ancient world testifying to a future retribution affords no semblance of support to the doctrine, which finds favour with men of the present day, of conditional immortality, which means that the good have the promise of eternal life, but that the wicked shall be blotted out of existence.

II. Granting that Tradition furnished sufficient ground for a belief in man's immortality, it remains, nevertheless, true that it did not offer to men of old that clear evidence on this point which we have in the authoritative and explicit teaching of the Gospel. Christ, it is written (2 Tim. i.), brought life and immortality to light. He bids us "labour not for the meat that perisheth,

but for that which endureth to life everlasting." He forewarns us that there is a day appointed when He will judge the world, and announces beforehand the sentence that will be passed upon the good and the bad: "These shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life eternal." The question, however, is raised as to what we are to understand by "eternal life," which is explained by some to mean an eternal living existence.

If this were the right interpretation of these words, if an eternal living existence is a boon to be bestowed upon the good and to be denied to the wicked, the doctrine of conditional immortality would seem to follow, inasmuch as, in that case, the time must sooner or later come when the wicked would cease to exist. Would seem to follow, I have said, because do not the words spoken of the wicked—"these shall go into eternal punishment"—clearly imply in their case an eternal living existence? But in truth, the words "eternal life" cannot, according to the use of Scripture, admit of this interpretation. The grace of God is the life of the soul. He who is out of the grace of God is, as regards the supernatural order, dead. "Sin when it is completed begetteth death," says St. James (i. 15). "We know that

we have passed from death unto life," says St. John (1 Ep. iii. 14), "because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death." Whoever, then, here upon the earth has God's grace in his soul, has eternal life in its incipient stage. Whoever perseveres in God's grace to the end of this life, which is the time of our probation, will be established therein for ever, for grace is the seed of glory. But let us listen to the explanation which our Blessed Lord Himself has given of these words. In the prayer which He addressed to His Father in behalf of His disciples He says (John xvii. 3), "This is eternal life, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent." Man knows God in this life by faith, as it is written, "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life" (John iii. 36). He knows Him in a more perfect manner by charity. For faith, which is the knowledge of God, leads to the love of God, and to the love of our neighbour for His sake. Hence it is written (1 John iii. 15), "He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer hath eternal life dwelling in him." In the next life man will know God not by faith, but by a most clear vision of God, whereby he will see Him as He is. He will know Him also by charity, not by such weak acts of love



as correspond with the imperfect knowledge of faith, but with a love as intense as the knowledge is sublime which proceeds from the beatific vision. Eternal life then means, in the language of Scripture, something very different from what is expressed by an eternal living existence; it means a union of man, restored to the perfection of his nature, with the Infinite God who has eternal life in Himself—a union begun in this life by grace and consummated hereafter in glory. In this perfection of man's nature is included the resurrection of his body. For Christ came to destroy sin and all its effects in those who believe in Him. He came to destroy death. He died and He rose again immortal and impassible. Death hath no longer dominion over Him. Now His resurrection is both the pledge and the model of ours; for, as it is written, "This corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality. And when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be accomplished the saying that has been written, Death shall be swallowed up in victory." The New Testament sets forth the doctrine of the immortality of man in such explicit terms as to leave no room for doubt in the mind of a believer in revelation. Prebendary Row contends, however, that the writings of the Old

Testament contain no distinct affirmation of the existence of a future life, and himself adopts the conclusion that the Jewish people had no distinct belief in it. He does not omit to notice the ardent faith of the Maccabee martyrs. Now whence did they derive their vivid faith? We are surely justified in saying it was from the sacred writings, since we find the Jewish leader emphatically declaring that it was from them that they drew consolation under the persecutions they endured (1 Macc. xii. 9). We might divide the books of the Old Testament into two separate classes: the first comprising the books which contain the laws affecting the Jews in their social and political state—for in this respect they were distinct from the other nations—the second being made up of the books which treated of such moral and religious duties as were common in their application to both Jews and Gentiles. Rabbi Adler, in his able paper, showed that the first-named books are pervaded throughout with the belief in a future life. Yet, for a very obvious reason, they make no appeal to future rewards and punishments. The other books, however, contain many direct references to the life hereafter. A certain number of instances may be here set down: Job xix. 25; Isa. xxvi. 19; Ezek. xxvi.

20; Dan. xii. 1; Ps. xxvii. 15; xxxvi. 9, 15; xlix. 15; lxxiii. 26; cxvi. 9, 15; Prov. xiv. 32; Eccles. xii. 7; Wisd. ii. 28; iii. 1; Ecclus. vii. 40; Tob. xii. 9; 2 Macc. vi. 26. Speaking to Timothy about the Holy Scriptures, which he had known from his infancy, St. Paul says (2 Tim. iii.) that they are profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work. It is plain the Apostle could not have spoken thus of the Old Testament if it did not clearly teach the doctrine of future rewards and punishments.

But what, it may be asked, are the reasons why no direct appeal is made in the Pentateuch to these future rewards and punishments? It is because the legal obligations of the Mosaic Law, so far as they did not embody the great precepts of the natural law, were imposed under other sanctions. Jews and Gentiles were alike called to eternal life. They could obtain that reward, both the one and the other, only on the same condition of faith and of observance of the moral precepts. The Apostle expressly declares to us that the Jews could not do so by the works of the Law, considered as such (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16); otherwise there would have been no need of the abrogation of the Jewish Law. God had chosen the

people of Israel out of all the nations, and had given them a law which kept them apart from all other peoples, to the end that they might preserve the knowledge of the true God upon the earth, which the other nations, as such, had lost. This law, which imposed upon them a heavy burthen over and above the observance of the natural precepts, was imposed under the sanction of temporal rewards and punishments. The promise of national prosperity, the threat of national calamity, are set before the people in the Pentateuch; and as the Jews remained, notwithstanding the signal favours bestowed upon them, a carnal-minded people, the prophets used the same motives to recall them to their duty when they had thrown off the yoke of the commandments as well of the natural law and of the Law of Moses.

It has been said that the works of the Law did not of themselves merit a reward hereafter. But if they were performed in a spirit of faith—and the Old Law prefigured the New—if they were performed in a true spirit of love and obedience, they were then what are called good works (Eph. ii. 10) as distinguished from legal works, and were meritorious of eternal life. It is not difficult, then, to explain how it was that the promise of earthly reward was put forward so prominently under the

Old Law, more particularly in the earlier times of the Jewish nation, and how it came to pass that after the Babylonish Captivity, when the people were no longer prone to idolatry, inspired writers appealed more frequently to higher motives of obedience. One can understand how this should be without calling in question the belief of the Jewish people—although not always a very practical belief—in the future state. And if we find that even the holiest amongst the Jews, like King Hezekiah, looked upon the life beyond the grave as wrapped in gloom, it must be borne in mind that the promised Deliverer had not yet come, and that, when the time of this life, the time of grace and of merit, was ended, the day was yet far distant ere the song of triumph would burst forth and the gate of heaven be thrown open to true believers.

III. We come now to the testimony borne by Reason to the truth of the doctrine of the immortality of man. Its testimony is not so clear and conclusive as that which is furnished by tradition and revelation. Nevertheless, as a complement to them, it is of very great use and importance; for it addresses itself to those who do not believe in revelation as well as to those who do. And in

these days, when well-nigh everything is called in question, it is, for such as accept this along with other doctrines upon the authority of revelation, some satisfaction to know that reason has nothing to say against it, but much in vindication of it. Catholics hold the doctrine of the immortality of the soul as *de fide*. But though there is no obligation to believe that this doctrine can be proved by reason, still one would lay himself open to censure who, without sufficient ground, should refuse to accept what is the common teaching of the Church. Thus the present Pope, in his Encyclical "*Humanum genus*," speaks of those who begin by turning from the Christian religion to follow the religion of Nature, and who, through the weakness of human reason or by a secret judgment of God which falls upon the proud, end by calling in question truths such as the existence of God, the spirituality and the immortality of the soul, which are made known by the light of Nature.

The arguments which may be brought from reason in support of this doctrine are of different kinds. Some of these the Rev. Garrett Horder has already set forth very forcibly and clearly. That which is founded on the constitution of man's nature may very properly be added to their number. This argument does not commend itself

to all, but the Schoolmen, who were not wanting in judgment and acumen, attach no little importance to it. They tell us first, that, as purely spiritual substances differ in their nature one from another—the spirit of God is not the same as the spirit of man—so souls, or the animating principle of organic substances, differ in like manner—the rational soul of man is not the same as the sensitive soul of animals. In the next place, they say that though all souls are in their nature simple and indivisible, yet all are not spiritual and immortal, but only those that are self-subsisting. The immortality of the soul of man they held to be a corollary which followed necessarily from its being a spiritual substance. It is thus St. Thomas Aquinas writes—“The soul of man is an intellectual substance. It must therefore be immortal.” Let me proceed to show the justness of this conclusion.

Some living substances contain within them the seed of their own dissolution. Thus our bodies whilst alive bear within them an element of decay. When the bond which holds together their constituent parts is dissolved by death they fall into corruption. There are other living substances which have in them no internal principle of decay, but which, being incomplete substances in them-

selves, and having their existence bound up with some other substance which is material and perishable, cease to exist when that material substance with which they are conjoined perishes. Such is the sensitive soul of the animal. It is in its nature simple, but it does not subsist in itself, but subsists in the body of which it is the animating principle. When, therefore, the body decays, it collapses, not having any ground of support in itself. In fine, there are living substances which contain in themselves no element of decay because they are immaterial and simple, and which, though conjoined with a material body, are not dependent upon it for their existence, but subsist in themselves, and are therefore, *per se*, and by their very nature, spiritual and immortal. Now it is to this class that the soul of man belongs.

But first it may be asked, what do we mean by saying that any created substance is immortal *per se*? We do not mean that God has it not in His power to annihilate what He has created. There is no creature which would not at once cease to be if He withdrew His supporting hand. What we mean is, that God has breathed into man a soul that is immortal and self-subsisting, *i.e.*, a soul which is spiritual, and which, if He does not reverse the established law of Nature and work a



miracle, will of itself live for ever. It remains for me to show: (1.) that the soul of man is in its nature simple, and consequently has not in itself any seed of corruption; (2.) that it is also self-subsisting, and therefore indestructible.

1. It will be more convenient for my purpose to enlarge the scope of my argument, and to prove not only that the soul of man, but that the soul of the animal also, must be held to be simple and without parts. A formal demonstration is not here required. Let one of the higher class of animals be taken as a specimen. What intelligence and sagacity are shown by the dog in so many ways! He at once recognises his master though he may have been long absent. He reads, so to put it, his thoughts and looks—is gladdened by the smile of his countenance—understands the least movement of his hand, nay, a mere nod of his head—obeys promptly the first sound of his voice. Now in what way can we account for these and so many similar movements which we see in animals? There is but one alternative. Either they are mere automata moved by the hand of God—yet surely no one will admit the truth of this hypothesis who is not forced to do so by the exigencies of some theory which he has adopted—or they are conscious of the impressions which are borne in

upon them through their organs of sense, and show their consciousness by the quick and spontaneous movements which they make in reply. Now this feeling of consciousness thus made manifest, these spontaneous movements thus promptly exerted, imply the existence within the animal of a principle of thought and also of self-movement both alike incompatible in origin and in nature with materialistic elements. The question here arises, If the soul of the animal is in its nature simple and indivisible, does it perish with the body? There are some who incline to believe that it does not perish with the body, but is immortal. Not having parts, it cannot perish by decomposition. And God does not annihilate anything which He has called into being. In support of the opposite opinion, which is more commonly held, reasons such as the following may be adduced. Not having any moral sense, properly so called, animals have no claims to reward, no future due to them. Again, they show no capacity for a higher life, being exclusively concerned about food, about pleasures, and the rendering of the service which the law of their nature imposes on them to their species and to man. As far, then, as we can judge of their destiny, they seem to be made for this world alone; and such expressions as are to be

met with in Sacred Scripture bearing upon this point seem to preclude the idea of their possessing a future life (Lev. xvii. 11). But the argument which has a special claim on our consideration is that founded upon the constitution of their nature. The Schoolmen deny that the souls of animals are immortal. They do not admit that they are annihilated, however, but say they perish with the body in accordance with the law of their nature. Their doctrine is, that the souls of animals are not created by God out of nothing, as are the souls of men, but are educed out of the potentialities of matter. What does that mean? When men are born they are born of the seed of Adam. But they do not receive their soul by generation from him. The soul is a distinct creation on the part of God. All other living creatures on earth derive their soul or vital principle and material substance—the two constituents of their being—from one source and through one channel. The Spirit of the Lord in the beginning brooded over the abyss, and gave power to the waters and to the land to bring forth life out of their womb, and provided for its continuance upon the earth. Thus we read the earth brought forth the tree bearing fruit and having *seed, each one according to its kind*. And again, Noah was commanded to take into the ark

some of all living things to *keep seed alive upon the face of the earth*. Vegetation had covered the mountains and plains. Animals had overrun the continents and islands before man trod upon the earth. But all these living things that have been or are now on the earth have one origin, both as to their material substance and as to its animating principle. They come from the prolific seed of those first living creatures which were produced out of inert matter by the fiat of Divine power; for living organisms proceed only from living creatures. What place, then, is there in a world of spirits for a soul of purely earthly origin, an incomplete substance of itself, and depending for its existence upon a body which is in decay? We can only say that if it were made immortal, incomplete as it is as a substance, this would not happen by the law of Nature, but by the special intervention of Divine Providence. And others besides Schoolmen would be loth to admit, without proof given, any interposition of Providence to perpetuate, for ever the existence of a substance incomplete in its nature.

This proof against the immortality of the souls of animals has been made to rest upon the principle, which was admitted in the Schools, that these souls must, by reason of their origin, retain to the end

an essentially materialistic character. As it would not be right to dwell longer on a merely incidental question, it will be sufficient to point out that the same conclusion may be arrived at whether this principle borrowed from the Schools be admitted or not.

We do not know the nature of a soul in itself: we judge of it by its operations. If we find that animals have external organs of sense, we infer from our own nature what that implies. They are capable of receiving impressions from objects that surround them. They are capable of acting upon the knowledge thus acquired, for the powers of thought and volition go hand in hand together. Are all their thoughts, then, and their desires trammelled and enclosed in this world of sense? If so, we may admit the soul of brutes to be in its nature simple because it is capable of thought and desire; but it is a soul which is without the power of operating, and therefore without the power of living if separate from a body furnished with organs of sense. The soul of brutes having, therefore, its subsistence in the body, must perish also with the body.

2. It is not so with man. His soul is spiritual. It dwells in the body, but it has not its subsistence in the body. For that which is spiritual subsists in itself. It is true, man has a sentient nature in common with the lower order of animals. The

powers and faculties which belong to that nature he shares with them. The sensations and emotions which they experience he experiences. But then he has at the same time a higher nature which lifts him up above this world of sense, and enables him to apprehend truths and facts of a different order, and to take part in a different sphere of action.

For consider, in the first place, he has an idea and conception of God, whom he recognises as a being of infinite perfection. He has a notion of religion which teaches him to render the homage due to God. He has ideas of truth and justice, of goodness and innocence, of gentleness and charity. In a word, he has a whole world of ideas opened up to him which have relation to none but spiritual beings. Again, consider the intellectual powers of man's nature—how out of the materials of the knowledge which is furnished to him as it is furnished to irrational creatures, viz., by the medium of the senses, he has constructed the different physical sciences, which are cultivated with so much ardour and success. This is but one out of the many triumphs which the human intellect has achieved, which, wherever it goes, bears upon it the mark and seal of its spiritual origin. Finally, consider the queenly faculty of man's will, which reigns over all the other powers, as well those

which belong to man's higher nature as those which belong to the lower, establishing all in due subordination. The will of man as much transcends the power of volition in the brute as the intellect of man transcends the intelligence of the brute. His will is free. How the free will of man is exercised is a mystery which man's intellect cannot explain, but it is in vain to dispute the fact. His free will is his highest gift. It is the manner in which he uses it that makes him morally what he is now and will be hereafter. There is no denying that it is a spiritual faculty which has power to raise itself and us along with it above all earthly desires. If, then, we are to judge of the nature of man's soul by its faculties and its operations, though very much that is important has been left unsaid, yet the conclusion seems undeniable that his soul is a spiritual substance. Now a spiritual substance is one that is in every way simple : it subsists in itself. United substantially with a body, one might say imprisoned in it, it cannot but be clogged and impeded in its operations until the day comes when it shall be set free from the body, or that body shall be made a spiritual body. But whether in the body or out of the body, the soul is, both in its essence and in its faculties, indestructible. By the law of its being it will live for ever.

## ARTICLE X.

BY THE REV. PRINCIPAL JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

IN this paper I shall endeavour to make a small contribution to this subject by offering some criticisms on the scheme of Conditional Immortality, as it has been called, which proposes itself as more satisfactory than the ordinary view of native immortality. In these remarks I shall confine myself to the system of the well-known defender of this aspect of the question, the Rev. Edward White, as set forth in his work "Life in Christ." I do not go beyond this, because it will generally be regarded as among the ablest, if not the very ablest, of the expositions of this scheme. I recognise the earnestness with which Mr. White writes, and the large extent of his adherence otherwise to evangelical theology. But as I cannot rest in his conclusions, I may be allowed to state some of the difficulties which his system raises, and which he does not seem to me to have overcome. Mr. White's system falls mainly into three propositions: *first*, that there is no Bible evidence of



native immortality in man; *secondly*, that one main design, if not the chief design, of Christ's incarnation and redemption work was to confer physical immortality upon those who should believe, and on them only; and, *thirdly*, that all others who reject the offer of this immortality, with the rest of Christ's redemption, are condemned to suffer beyond death, and then to be physically destroyed. There is much else in Mr. White's elaborate work that might be noticed, but these propositions bear directly on the subject of discussion in this magazine. I shall endeavour to put away the consideration of consequences, and regard the question as one of Bible evidence.

I. In regard to native immortality, no one, I think, will deny that the Bible does not proceed in the ordinary way of extra-scriptural psychology in grounding that doctrine upon a clear distinction between a material and an immaterial, and hence a perishable and imperishable, element in man's constitution. But still, notwithstanding all that Mr. White has said, it is, I think, undoubted that the balance of Scripture evidence is against the scheme of native mortality. There belong to the subject such considerations as these: (1.) Man was made in the image of God, crowning the rest of

the creation. Dominion over the creatures cannot be held to exhaust this, which demands intellectual and moral superiority and communion with God; and although the inference may not be rigorous, it is at least natural that this higher kind of being was destined to be also more prolonged. (2.) Death could not have been a penalty or curse if extinction had been the normal end of man. It could only have been so if the extinction had been hastened; but this Mr. White does not hold, nor that men die prematurely or with other aggravations, as the only element of curse. I at least have failed to find in Mr. White's book what of physical death he regards as *normal* and what as *penal*. If he holds that "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die" means "Thou shalt incur aggravated physical death," that is as non-natural a use of the word as what he charges on those who have supposed death then to have begun in a deeper and wider sense. (3.) Mr. White has not done justice to such texts as assert a difference between the death of the lower creatures and that of man. Thus Eccles. iii. 19, which appears to identify the spirits of men and of beasts (whether that is to be taken as the doubt of scepticism or in whatever other way), is alone quoted by Mr. White (p. 103), while the strong utterance in

Eccles. xii. 7 is omitted, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (4.) Mr. White grants abundant evidence even in the Old Testament of belief in continued existence of the human being in conscious life after death. However hard it was on his theory, he freely concedes that Sheol is not the grave, but a world of departed and disembodied spirits. "The plain indications," he says, "of faith in a survival of souls in death, many of them in a state not blessed nor leading to blessedness, adds force to the impression given by the forecited passages announcing judgment" (p. 191). "That the Jews themselves had gathered from their own Scriptures, and had received by tradition from their fathers, the fixed anticipation of 'a resurrection both of the just and unjust' is certified to us by St. Paul and St. Luke, who declare that they themselves 'allow this' (Acts xxvi. 7)." The "'second' death of the New Testament revelation is but the reflection of an Old Testament doctrine. The souls of the wicked continue in Sheol, the Underworld" (p. 191, 192). Mr. White does not seem to see that by these admissions, and the parallel case of the rich man and Lazarus in the intermediate state, he cuts away his own argument from the want of

evidence on natural principles as to any separate part of man being endowed with such vitality as the ordinary doctrine maintains; for a vitality is found, not in the good only, but in the bad, which outlasts the stroke of death, and thus overthrows the most formidable objection to native immortality. To all believers in revelation the want of experience as to survival is made up for and the prejudice against it destroyed. Though this may not be a formal statement of man's immortality, practically it goes a long way in that direction, and the burden of proof now lies on those who maintain that an existence which has survived the terrible catastrophe of death is yet to end. This is not always remembered by the advocates of final mortality. The soul is in possession; after the resurrection the body too; and the evidence would need to be very strong that this existence, preserved through death and the grave, is still to succumb to a future stroke. (5.) Mr. White does not seem to have accounted for our Lord's silence as to the error of the Pharisees regarding native immortality. According to Mr. White, this error, which has wrought such mischief to the souls of men, was then in full career and development. These traditionalists our Lord so far sided with against the Sadducees as to the certainty of the

blessedness of the future life ; but He said not one word against the dangerous error which in their hands had made immortality, in a certain sense, a common human attribute, and had weakened by so much the sense of obligation to Himself as the giver of life. All that Mr. White says is, that from any confirmation of this view of the Pharisees Christ "steadfastly abstained" (p. 207). But was this all that was to be expected of Christ in contact with so deadly and soul-destroying an error as Mr. White represents it? Did Christ only "steadfastly abstain" from confirming their views of justification or of the Sabbath, or other errors, and not, rather, by exposing them, shatter them in pieces ; and, therefore, He must here have agreed with them ; and Mr. White cannot reasonably ask that if He agreed He should have formally said so, since a faithful and wise teacher who condemns one part of a mixed system does not need formally to specify all his agreements with it, but fails if he suppresses other and equal discords that exist.

II. The *second* part of Mr. White's scheme, that Christ came to give physical life or immortality to those who before had no share in it, but had lost their only prospect of it by the Fall and incurred

additional penalty after death, does not seem, with all respect for him, more fully established. Mr. White grants that Christ came and suffered to do more than give this endless prolonged life, viz., to atone for past transgressions that barred the way to it, and give a justification which might thus be "of life." And he claims to hold along with this radical view of a life-giving mission such secondary associations in connection with "life" as Christ's gift as would take in much, if not all, that on the common view is meant by the substitution through Christ, in the lot of His people, of happiness for misery, or spiritual good for evil, though he contends that physical immortality, even in these uses of the word "life," is the primary and determining idea. It is quite evident that Mr. White could not prove his thesis if the word "life," as denoting the issue of Christ's mission, might *equally* be taken in the sense of physical immortality or of spiritual blessing, salvation, or happiness to beings physically immortal, but otherwise needing something that could be called "life." He must hold a preponderant use, as he does, in the literal sense; and hence his argument, as an exegetical one, is met if it can be shown that Christ's mission and work in the Scriptures are spoken of in terms

which allow no such preponderance to deathlessness in the literal acceptance. Now it seems very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out Mr. White's rule of interpretation in such fundamental texts as these : (Luke xv. 32), "This my son was *dead* and is *alive* again ; he was *lost* and is *found*." The parallelism binds down the words here essentially to a *moral* recovery, and not to a *physical* enlargement of powers and capacities. Death is explained to mean what is morally a "living death," that is, a spiritual death, in the ordinary language of theology ; and as "lost" also receives by the antithesis "found" a meaning in the same sense, so cardinal a passage cannot but rule others, as where it is said (Luke xix. 10), "The Son of Man is come *to seek* and to save that which was *lost* ;" (Matt. x. 6), "Go ye rather to the *lost* sheep of the house of Israel." Mr. White grants, also, such important texts as these to be used in the moral sense : (Rev. iii. 1), "Thou hast a name that thou *livest* and art *dead*," and (Eph. ii. 1), "You hath He *quickened* who were *dead* in trespasses and sins." Did any one want to prove that the essence of man's death lies in separation from God and the sinful opposition of the heart to Him, could he produce more appropriate texts ? Nor is it any answer to say that the cure of this evil lies

essentially in physical immortality; for even Mr. White would not maintain this; and all that he could draw from the figure is, that this wrong state of the soul resembles *death*, and that the moral victory over it is a *resurrection*, which, however, does not give such a secondary colour as he wants. If we appeal to the Gospel of John, in which he seeks his strongest and clearest evidence, to me the fact seems much the other way, and that nowhere are the words "death" and "life" more frequently and radically taken in a moral and spiritual meaning.

Thus in the very first text of the Gospel, where the word "life" occurs (i. 4), "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." The higher life or divinity of Jesus acts here as a moral force giving light, so that the death which preceded is essentially darkness, as in the next verse, "And the light shineth in darkness," &c., or verse 10, "The world knew Him not;" so that the birth spoken of in verse 13, "which were born not of blood," &c., is essentially a moral and not a physical change. In harmony with this, in chapter iii. 6, the change made by the birth of the spirit is opposed to the natural birth of the flesh. The element of darkness again returns (iii. 19), "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light,



because their deeds were evil." Is not the deliverance, then, in this chapter, which is also spoken of as a deliverance from "condemnation" and from "wrath," a moral and spiritual one, a change of character as well as of relation to God's law, so that those who partake it do not "perish," do not continue to be "lost," like the wandering sheep or wandering prodigal, but have the true, the eternal life in communion with the Saviour and through His Spirit? It is true that this brings with it a blessed immortality; but it is left to those who examine this whole context to judge whether the dominant idea is the conveyance of physical immortality to natures hitherto devoid of it. This explains the numerous passages in the Gospel where "life" is connected with light or knowledge, *e.g.* (xvii. 3), "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God," &c.; and the magnitude of this as a moral and spiritual blessing may be learned from the last verse of the chapter, "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." This is surely nearer the heart of Christianity, and makes up more of its life, than the transformation of natively perishable beings into imperishable, though both changes should go together, as Mr.

White holds ; so that whatever he soundly teaches in regard to the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost cannot redress the wrong equilibrium of his system. It is worthy of notice that the "life" which Christ gives is explained not only by contrast with darkness and the birth of the flesh, but by other moral emblems. Thus the "living water" in John iv. 14 is not so much an elixir producing immortality, but a remedy for "thirst," the thirst of the soul—that is, for all its deepest wants ; and the "bread of life" in John vi. 35, while great stress is laid on the perpetuity of its effects, in contrast with the transient influence of the manna, is set forth radically as a provision for "hunger," the hunger of the soul. "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger ;" "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him." So also in the 8th chapter, the life which Christ gives as the Light of the world is liberty (viii. 36), "If the Son therefore shall make you free," &c., which is opened out into emancipation from the lying and murderous spirit of Satan. In the 10th chapter the Good Shepherd, who elsewhere supplies water and bread, gives pasture and keeps the sheep safe in His hand. This is surely the meaning of verse 28, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never *perish*, neither shall any

pluck them out of My hand," that is, they shall not be "lost" sheep, seduced by temptation or overcome by evil power. Whether this be the meaning, or the averting of physical extinction, must be left to individual judgment; as also whether the Apostle John has not fastened the word "life," not by a secondary but primary association, to moral and spiritual good in recording the one utterance of our Lord (xiv. 6), "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man *cometh unto the Father*, but by Me."

It is superfluous to proceed to the apostolical epistles. In Rom. viii. 6 the wrong spiritual state is formally called "death." "To be carnally minded is death," not, as Mr. White (p. 308) explains, "ends in death," though his reading of the second clause grants all that any one can contend for: "The mind of the spirit is (ends in) life and peace (unites to God now and for ever)." Life is here admitted to mean "union with God," which is surely a spiritual idea; and there is here no reference to "that death by sin which extinguishes the hope of immortality" in Mr. White's sense; for the one clause must mean the same kind of death or life with the other. So far as Mr. White holds "that in the phrases in question there is a strong moral association of ideas suggesting a sinful

condition" (p. 307), there is no quarrel with him; but he must go farther, and show that this sinful state is never so called "death" and its opposite, "life," as to make it credible against himself that Christ's work was to bring about this revolution in men previously immortal in the natural sense, and thus turn their immortality into a blessing; or he has done nothing to support his argument that physical immortality only comes through Christ. Those who hold "life in Christ" in the sense of Christ transforming a ruined character and a miserable immortality into a holy character and a blessed immortality refuse the conclusion of Mr. White's "Life in Christ," that a physical immortality which comes only in Christ is supported by these texts; and it is left to impartial judgment whether he has not strained these passages, and, in seeking everywhere a predominant physical idea, impaired their testimony to the transcendent greatness of a spiritual regeneration and communion with God, which dominates the whole Gospel, and *redeems*, instead of first *creating*, physical immortality.

III. It only remains to make a remark or two upon the *third* part of Mr. White's scheme, which is the physical destruction of all who come short of

the so-called "life in Christ." Mr. White has no doubt laboured this part of his work very much ; but I cannot see that he has maintained his position against the ordinary view. He tries to show that the numerous passages in the Phædo of Plato which the philosopher applies to the conceivable destruction of the soul, only to declare them inapplicable in point of fact, are applied in the New Testament as indicating actual fact and experience of soul-destruction. Now this would be quite convincing if in the New Testament the words had no other meaning, but were fixed down in the context to these Platonic senses. But I understand Mr. White to grant that a word otherwise expressing "destruction" may be used in a secondary sense, as, *e.g.*, "Let the dead bury their dead," "This my son was dead," "Dead in trespasses and sins," and that in spite of ever so much authority for its primary use in other cases. Even if Mr. White does not grant this, without also supposing in every text of the kind in Scripture an allusion to physical destruction, the secondary use is undeniable, and readers must judge for themselves whether physical destruction, if not present, yet prospective, must or must not be included. This is quite excluded by one text (1 Tim. v. 6), "She that liveth in pleasure is dead *while she liveth*." No

Platonic authority can turn this into a threatened extinction of the soul, or, I humbly think, the other texts that have been already quoted, which call a radically wrong and wicked state "death," and its opposite "life," and speak of "wrath" or "condemnation" as "abiding on sinners in place of "eternal life." Beyond all question, men like the prodigal son and other sinners are already in a "perishing" state, the Platonic word being the same. The son of "perdition" is already "lost" (John xvii. 12), and there is a "destruction" (*φθορά*) "in the world through lust" (2 Peter i. 4) from which Christians even here "escape." To say that the apostles could not, in speaking of the soul, have used Plato's words in a new and deeper meaning, looking upon the present state of sinners as one of death, perdition, destruction, and loss, is to say that they could not have had any deeper ideas than Plato or other Greek writers, whose words they must in any case have used, for there were no others, and all that they required was to give them such a connection that the context would explain the difference. This is not, as Mr. White says, to make inspiration destroy revelation, but rather make a deeper revelation in old language; and the problem is that of every missionary translator all over the world. Given, then, this use of

these words, Mr. White cannot argue as if it were non-existent; for nothing is thus decided as to the *continuance* of a destruction which exists already all life through in the case of sinners, which is prolonged, as in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, into the intermediate state, and which the very body (already in the ordinary sense "destroyed") is to be resuscitated to share. Scripture must here be its own interpreter; and where the word "destroy" is used in such varying senses, as, for example, in Rev. xi. 18, "That Thou shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth," a case where destruction of existence is no more necessitated in the case of the inhabitants than of the earth itself, it is hard, as Mr. White does in the case of future penalty, to fix it down to literal extinction. There remains the evidence under the head of alleged survival in a penal state. Mr. White, while he grants the strength of some of the passages as interpreted in support of changeless penalty, makes, as is well known, an effort to set aside them all. In this I cannot follow him any more than in the interpretations which I have noticed in this paper. Space is already exhausted; and this discussion does not bear as much on the grounds of belief in immortality generally as on the grounds of belief in the immortality of the unsaved. I will only

notice that, whatever of moral difficulty the ordinary conclusion presents, it has been generally felt that views like those of Mr. White, in the face of the strong language as to duration, present greater exegetical difficulty ; and this will be more realised if it be the case that the support mainly sought by him in the counter expressions taken literally as to "death," "destruction," "perdition," &c., is insecure. I am far from insensible to the moral difficulties connected with the serious and even awful view as to penalty without end, which I am constrained by fidelity to Scripture to hold. But I cannot exclude this greatest mystery of Christianity, by fair exegetical procedure, from its teaching ; and remembering how necessarily dark to human reason the whole question of the origin and continuance of evil must be in this world, I am willing to "wait the great teacher Death, and God adore."



## ARTICLE XI.

BY THE REV. EDWARD WHITE.

THE question which has been proposed for this Symposium has been taken by preceding writers in two different senses, the historical and the theological. 1. *What have been regarded by men in past ages as foundations of their belief in immortality?* 2. *What ought we to regard as the solid foundations of belief in it?* A similar ambiguity has attached to the word Immortality during the discussion. Some of my predecessors have treated it as signifying only an eternal duration of life beyond; others as signifying either a survival which may be of limited duration or an absolutely eternal survival. In attempting to summarise and disentangle the arguments so far as they have gone, I shall indicate my own belief on the main question, while employing the word Immortality, not in the sense of a limited survival, but exclusively in its proper sense of an eternal and deathless survival. There is one important principle which underlies the various senses of this word as employed by preceding writers. They all

alike take it to signify, both in Latin and English, *deathlessness*; that is, they take *mors*, or death, in the sense of ceasing to *live*, and by the addition of the negative *in* they fix the meaning of the compound *immortality* to the idea of *not ceasing to live*. All the alleged figurative meanings of *death* are laid aside, and the word is used by all alike in its natural and fundamental sense, to represent the idea that man, or his soul, will not die or cease to live. This is well worth noting here, since most of the writers will probably object to my imitation of their own example in the latter part of this argument.

All those who have already written, except Prebendary Row and Professor Stokes, have assumed that the proof of survival of the soul at the death of the body is equivalent to the proof of its immortality; and some, especially Mr. Garrett Horder and Mr. Robinson Gregory, seem to consider the drawing of any distinction between the two almost as trifling with the evidence and contrary to the established modes of thought, both ancient and modern. The distinction, nevertheless, is not only real, but of the highest importance. Throughout the organic world we meet with survivals which are not lasting but temporary. The seeds of all plants are living survivals of portions of the struc-

ture which dies, themselves to die in their turn when their end is answered; Nature thus giving, even in the physical sphere, an emphatic warning against the assumption that all parts of an organisation which are produced at once always perish together. They may alike perish eventually, but at different epochs. The butterfly concealed in the chrysalis, if it could reason, might correctly argue from its own structure, and specially from its wings, that it was destined to outlive the chrysalis, but it would be mistaken in thinking that it would live for ever. And, for anything that appears as yet in this series of papers, men may be equally mistaken, while putting their chrysalis speculations in place of Divine Revelation, in confounding all survivals of the soul for judgment (to a vague but real belief in which conscience largely leads mankind) with immortality. No answer has been yet given to Prebendary Row's observations on this subject in the first paper :—

“For aught we know,” he says, “there may be diseases, such as deadly forms of evil, which may destroy the substance of the soul, whatever it may be, just as there are diseases which destroy the body. Further, as we are certain that our conscious existence once had a beginning, we have no means of knowing that when it has fulfilled the purpose for which it has been brought into existence it may not have a termination.

These are points on which reason is absolutely silent ; and consequently light can be thrown on them only by a revelation. Reasons which may be adequate to prove that our conscious personality may survive the dissolution of our bodies may be quite inadequate to prove that it will never have a termination ; our ignorance of what spirit or personality is renders all reasonings on such subjects alike futile" (p. 281).

These observations may be considered in contrast with Bishop Weathers' very confident definitions and assertions, in the eighth paper, on the "Nature of Spirit," and on the distinction between the "soul" and the "spirit" of animals and of mankind. "Whether in the body or out of the body, *the soul is, both in its essence and in its faculties, indestructible. By the law of its being it will live for ever.*" What can the Right Rev. writer know of essences ? What can the coadjutor Bishop of Cardinal Manning, or even Leo XIII., author of the Encyclical "*Humanum genus*," certainly know concerning "the law of the soul's being" which is unknown to Prebendary Row, to Professor Stokes, or to the immense number of able and religious men in all civilised nations who now steadfastly maintain that *eternal* survival of all human souls cannot be established on grounds either of moral instinct or of psychology ? In a recent Synod of the Reformed Church of France, held at Montpellier last October, and composed

of men some of them as able as any at Rome, a paper denying this "natural law of being," or inherent immortality, was read by M. Babut (described by M. de Pressensé, the distinguished Senator of France, as the "leader of Evangelical Protestantism" in the Southern Departments)—a paper which was assented to by M. Bonnet of Frankfort, the well-known Evangelical commentator, and supported by Sabatier, the Christian science-professor of Montpellier; the whole assembly of fifty pastors offering no serious resistance to their statements. Only last December, again, Professor Bonney, one of our own most distinguished men of science, and a preacher of orthodox Christianity, in his Hulsean Lecture at Cambridge, took the same ground, as a believer in life in Christ only, and declined to rest man's hope of immortality on "the law of his being." It seems to me futile to affirm that the solid foundation of all human hope lies in a psychological dogma so frequently rejected by men of the keenest sagacity and of steadfast faith. When there is a question of any real doctrine of natural religion of which it can be said, "*God hath showed it to them*" (Rom. i. 19), as, for example, the doctrine of God's existence, or of the obligation of conscience in matters of justice and purity, or

even the general doctrine of "judgment to come," there is no radical difference between honest and godly men in any age or country, and then, I think, revelation always explicitly confirms the dictates of such natural conscience. But this cannot truly be said of the dogma of the absolute eternity and immortality of *all* souls—a dogma on which, notwithstanding the vigorous affirmations of Mr. Garrett Horder and several other symposiasts, there has been no *consensus*, either in ancient or modern times, among religious men, and of which there is not even one single mention in any of the books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, covering a space of 1500 years.

It has been asserted several times in this Symposium that the historical evidence now before us in monuments and books shows that the *general belief of ancient nations* favoured the opinion of the immortality of all souls. Nothing can be farther from the fact. If the Egyptian beliefs, reckoning from the remotest antiquity, may be taken as a specimen of primeval doctrine on this subject, it may be positively declared that all the leading Egyptologists of Europe are now agreed that this belief restricted immortality, or eternal life, to the good; that the Egyptians

believed only in a temporary survival of the wicked, whose souls, they steadfastly held, were at last devoured and destroyed by avenging demons, under the judgment of Osiris in Amenti, or the Underworld. M. Edouard Naville, of Geneva, who stands at the head of this department of study, recently favoured me with a letter in which he says of the ancient Egyptian belief—"I have no doubt that the fate of the wicked is destruction. We often hear of treacherous guides who lead the soul to the place of destruction. It is spoken of enemies who devour souls, who live upon them. It is spoken also of 'dead spirits,' of the furnaces wherein the deceased asks not to fall. There is a chapter in the 'Book of the Dead' of not dying the second death. All these images indicate a final destruction, and that explains why, contrary to what we see in other mythologies, such as Homer's, there is hardly any description of the state of the wicked in the 'Book of the Dead.'" Precisely of the same judgment is the great French Egyptologist, the Vicomte E. de Rougé:—"La seconde mort figure en première ligne parmi les supplices des méchants. *Horus, le dieu vengeur, livre leurs âmes à l'annihilation.*" M. Lichtenberger, in the "Encyclopédie des Sciences Religieuses," M. Lenormant, and Mr. Reginald

Stuart Poole, of the British Museum, in recent articles, have expressed an equally positive judgment in the same direction. Among literary men who are historians of opinion without being Egyptologists at first hand, Professor Rawlinson may be mentioned as maintaining the same conclusion. The Egyptians from first to last, from the earliest times to the latest, believed in the immortality of the good, but only through union with Osiris and "justification" after trial; and they also believed that the incurably wicked, through various modes of punishment, would be utterly destroyed. There is nothing more surely regarded as settled by the most learned authorities on Egypt than this. Perhaps we shall now hear fewer confident statements as to the belief of all antiquity in a future state, necessitated and determined by the quality of the soul as essentially immortal. I must leave my predecessors, who have imputed their own philosophy to the primitive ages, to settle their accounts with the Egyptologists. The Egyptians seem to have had not an inkling of that which Bishop Weathers knows of the "essence of the soul," of that "law of its being" which rendered it "indestructible," and compelled it, good or bad, to "live for ever."

But then the Scripture writers of Israel seem



to have been in precisely the same predicament with the Egyptians; for they never once explicitly teach us that we all have immortal souls, while the New Testament is as silent on this "fundamental truth" as Moses and the prophets.

In former years I think I attached too much credence to the single testimony of Josephus as to the doctrine of the Pharisees on the "immortality of the soul." Some of them, doubtless, held the heathen psychological doctrine on this subject; but during more recent years Archdeacon Farrar has thrown a flood of light on Jewish belief *in the age of Christ* and the generations following in his greatest work, on "Mercy and Judgment,"—light which forbids us to rely on the Grecising and deceptive Josephus, and assures us that the Jews of the Roman times largely retained the "Conditionalism" of their forefathers, as expounded by the illustrious Maimonides of a later age. Maimonides distinctly and positively teaches, in various forms of speech, that the ancient Hebrew doctrine was the eternal survival of the righteous alone, and that the wicked man is called a "dead" man because destined to death eternal in the sense of extinction. Chap. viii. "De Pœnitentiâ."

*Modern Jewish* writers, such as the French Grand Rabbi Stein, in his work on "Judaism,"

1859, candidly acknowledge (while maintaining for themselves, along with Dr. Adler, the hope of eternal life on the philosophical basis of natural immortality) that they cannot find that doctrine in the Old Testament. Dr. Stein, with severer accuracy, in my opinion, than Dr. Adler, admits that the natural immortality of all souls, as the basis of a hope beyond death, is not to be found in the Mosaic writings. He says:—

“What causes most surprise in perusing the Pentateuch is the silence it seems to keep respecting the most fundamental and consoling truths. The doctrines of *the immortality of the soul* and of retribution beyond the tomb are able powerfully to fortify man against the violence of passions, the seductive attraction of vice, and to strengthen his steps in the rugged paths of virtue. Of themselves they smooth all the difficulties which are raised, all the objections which are made, against the government of a Divine Providence, and account for the good fortune of the wicked and bad fortune of the just. *But man searches in vain for these truths which he desires so ardently ; he in vain devours with anxiety each page of Holy Writ ; he does not find either them or the simple doctrine of the resurrection of the dead explicitly announced.*”

Dr. Stein then goes on to maintain that these truths respecting “man’s natural immortality,” &c., “were supplied by the traditions of the Oral Law.” (“Le Judaïsme, ou la Vérité sur le Talmud,” p. 15.)

Rabbi Hermann Adler, in his charming paper,

introduces, I venture to think, some confusion into the argument by treating the many clear indications of faith in an eternal life among the saints of the Old Testament as so many proofs of the *natural immortality* of the souls of all, as if it were clear that their faith rested on that psychological premiss. Rabbi Stein demolishes that "foundation of belief in immortality" in Old Testament times by frankly confessing that the Hebrew Bible contains "not one single indication of hope built on such a basis." But Rabbi Adler, I think, demonstrates, with a victorious exegesis against Prebendary Row and other questioners of the faith and hope of the saints of Judaism, that both Moses and the prophets had just as sure a belief in the immortal life of the servants of God as good men possess in modern times. How could it be that the saints of a nation who had lived for several centuries in Egypt, where the world to come was almost as vividly conceived of as the present world, where elaborate pictures of the judgment of the soul after death were painted on every mummy-case and depicted in every copy of the "Book of the Dead," where the expectation of the bodily resurrection of the just to the life immortal by the power of Osiris was proclaimed by every pyramid-tomb, was taught

in every priestly lesson—how could it be that the servants of the living God should have come up out of Egypt with no faith or hope of a future state, of a future judgment, or a life immortal? I can only request the reader to reperuse Rabbi Adler's irresistible argument for the existence of this hope of immortality *for the worshippers of the Eternal God* from one end to the other of the Old Testament.

But this hope nowhere rests in the Old Testament on the doctrine of the natural immortality of all souls, nor is it accompanied by the doctrine of the eternal misery of the wicked. It is here that Rabbi Adler, as I humbly think, goes off the right path; and I will venture to supply the correction, not in my own words, but in those of the great German Commentary superintended by Dr. Lange, of Bonn. In commenting on our Lord's argument with the Sadducees (in Luke xx.) Dr. Oosterzee thus solves the enigma which has led astray, in opposite directions, both the eminent and honoured rabbis of France and of England, Dr. Stein and Dr. Adler, and places the hope of Israel on its true basis—the grace of God, made known to His spiritual worshippers and denied to the wicked—in conformity with primitive doctrine maintained (under a more heathenish form) by the

Egyptian theology, which restricted immortality to the righteous. Dr. Oosterzee says—

“The unique manner in which our Lord here supports the doctrine of the Resurrection particularly deserves our attention. Far from occupying the standing-point usually occupied by philosophers, who are wont to take their notions of immortality from the nature of the human soul, and, consequently, *to prove what is doubtful by what is unknown*, He finds the firmest ground for the hope of everlasting life in the personal communion of man with God. He thus, however, gives us to understand that we cannot attain full possession of our own immortality till we have the assurance and consciousness of individual communion with God. The hidden reason of their scepticism was thus pointed out to the Sadducees as being none other than the alienation of their inner life from Him; while the true foundation of hope for the future, and the only way to perfect certainty, was, at the same time, shown them. Religious apologists of ancient and modern times would certainly have lost nothing if they had more closely imitated this example, and had not attempted to demonstrate the immortality of the soul to those who did not even believe in the living God, and had not the slightest notion of communion with Him. The deepest experience of our own heart teaches us that without these premisses a belief in immortality is partly uncertain and partly uninfluential, and that as long as we have not found God we have really lost even ourselves. *Believers under the Old, and even under the New Testament, have all walked in this way*, and not till after they were assured of the favour of God have they felt sure of eternal life. *The immortality of the soul was no such dogma of the Old Testament as was the Unity of the Godhead*. But if any one were conscious that God was his God, he knew, also, that He would always remain so; and

if any knew by experience what it was to hold communion with God, he might fall asleep in the steadfast hope of one day 'beholding His face in righteousness.' The rationalistic doctrine of immortality is no better than a doctrine of Hades. Everything depended on *our* attaining a conception of eternal spiritual *life* in God after death which was not a mere *existence* in Hades. And this hope was granted only to His saints."

These pregnant and penetrating words will show further how it is that there is no prospect held out to wicked men on a psychological basis in the Old Testament of an endless life. It is because such a prospect forms no part of the Divine purpose. Their souls descend to Sheol or Hades. "The *Rephaim* (or ghosts) are there" (Heb.), (Prov. ix. 18; xxi. 16; Ps. xlix.) But they have no portion in the resurrection to eternal life; for "*all the wicked He will destroy*" (Ps. cxlv. 20). "*When the wicked spring as the grass, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish, IT IS THAT THEY SHALL BE DESTROYED FOR EVER*" (Ps. xcii. 7), the strongest Hebrew word for extermination.

So much, then, on the foundations of belief in man's immortality that prevailed in Egypt and among the Israelites. The *heathen Greek* foundations of belief in it are well represented by Plato and his followers, Mr. Page Hopps and Mr. Garrett

Horder, whose highly interesting papers re-echo the eloquence of the Phædo as imaginative compositions. I am compelled, however, to admit that they rest their opinion and hope on a more sandy basis than that of the great Athenian sage, since Plato at least provided for future immortality by the assumption of pre-existence. Mr. Horder and Mr. Page Hopps, on the contrary, wish us to think, notwithstanding all we now know of the mode of production of human beings, of the gradual process of their development from germs, that the animating principle of each (it may be) abortive human formation, at some unknown stage of its imperfect evolution, acquires a durability, in all cases, by the Divine will, as everlasting as the nature of Deity itself. If those who hold this belief—whether thinking that souls come *ex traduce* or by distinct creation, which Bishop Weathers pronounces to be the true doctrine—would give us some approximate idea of the pre-natal epoch at which this marvellous gift of an immortal soul is bestowed, it would become easier for us to accept their opinion. At present, although fully sensible of the magical effect of both Mr. Horder's and Mr. Page Hopps' Platonic utterances, and not altogether regardless, either, of the authority of the Pope, alleged by Bishop Weathers, or

of the authority of the Methodist Conference, represented by Mr. Robinson Gregory, I have still found myself, like Cicero, after reading the Phædo, relapsing into incredulity immediately that the music ends.

To do them justice, however, Mr. Page Hopps, Mr. Garrett Horder, and Mr. Robinson Gregory all attribute *some* utility, as aiding our faith in our natural immortality, to the Christian revelation. Mr. Horder specially attributes to "Jesus Christ" the "confirmation of the idea of immortality," "*though it did not originate with Him.*" "He has changed a yearning into a settled assurance." "He has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel," that is, "He has brought it from the realm of shadow into the revealing light of day." The "it" here is the supposed fact of the natural immortality, the naturally deathless life, of all souls born of Adam.

This leads to the principal observation which I have to offer on the preceding series of papers, with the exception of those of Mr. Row and Professor Stokes. Neither the Jewish rabbi nor the Unitarian philosopher may listen willingly to me



here, but I submit my opinion, not altogether without hope, to their candid consideration also, while specially addressing those who accept, with me, a belief in the Christ of the New Testament, **THE WORD MADE FLESH.**

Nothing has struck many readers in the careful and repeated perusal of the preceding contributions to this Symposium on the true foundation of the belief in man's immortality so much as the contrast between the insignificant place assigned in those arguments to the Divine Incarnation, and the central place assigned to it as the foundation of immortal hope for man in all the New Testament writings.

In these contributions there has prevailed, even in the most orthodox of the series, as Principal Cairns's, a persistent endeavour to lay the basis of our hope of eternal life on the original constitution of man as immortal in his spirit, however perishable in his body. It is man as man who "hath immortality." It is this, they think, which renders it so urgent a case, before the Divine mercy, to redeem him from eternal misery, into which sin will sink him if he dies impenitent. In the four Gospels and in the apostolic Epistles I find no single sentence corresponding with these endeavours. Man's soul is nowhere affirmed to be endued with

immortality. No single argument set forth by Mr. Horder or Mr. Hopps, by Mr. Robinson Gregory or Bishop Weathers, is even once referred to by Christ or His Apostles as the foundation of a hope of a deathless life beyond. On the contrary, all the resources of language are exhausted by the New Testament in attributing the gift of everlasting life to the Incarnation of the SON OF GOD.

The doctrine of the union of the Eternal Logos of God with the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ has ever been the grand crux of the New Testament Christianity. To get rid of this whole Gospels must be declared pious forgeries of a later age, whole apostolic Epistles condemned as spurious. I reject, indeed, as inexpedient, the systematic *popular* use of the unbiblical term "Trinity," as also several of the bolder definitions of the very late so-called Athanasian Creed, as going beyond the record. But, firmly holding the authenticity of St. John's Gospel, and maintaining with Dr. Dörner that this Gospel only more fully expands what is already clearly taught in the Synoptics, Christ is to me the Eternal Son of God. But in the apostolic writings I find this mystery of mysteries always taught, both by Christ and His followers, in closest connection with the *gift of*

*eternal life to regenerate men.* The doctrine of the two Adams underlies and runs throughout the New Testament:—of the first Adam, through whom we receive “soulual” or psychical life, and of the Second Man, “the Lord from heaven,” from whom we receive “spiritual” and “eternal” life. The doctrine of Regeneration is based upon this distinction. Unless we are born twice we shall die twice. “Ye must be born again,” or die the “second death” (Rom. viii. 3-14). “The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John ii. 17).

In every conceivable mode of speech Christ Himself unites this assertion of His own Godhead with that of man’s “*not dying*” or “*perishing*,” “but having everlasting life.” That wonderful and much neglected chapter, John vi., is one prolonged declaration that man’s undying life depends on the Divine Incarnation.

Need I add that, in the judgment of the present writer, now supported by that of many far more competent persons, these two stupendous facts are closely connected in the relation of cause and effect, and that the main difficulty in Apostolic Christianity, the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship and Divine nature of the Christ, is explained as

the Incarnation of "the LIFE" (John i.) by the solution given; that this awful procedure has for its end the endowment of man—doomed to perish under the law—with an ever-expanding, indestructible life in God; so that here, and here alone, is the true "foundation of the belief in man's immortality." Sinful man's everlasting being and blessedness are the results of the Divine Incarnation, and are not the results of his natural constitution.

The long prevalence in Europe of the philosophic doctrine of the natural immortality of all souls has steadily acted on the interpretation of Scripture in such a manner as to impose non-natural senses upon several leading lines of the terminology. The entire line of references to *life* and *death* throughout the Bible in relation to human destiny has been dealt with in such a manner as to consist with the metaphysical system which has governed interpretation. *Death, destruction, perishing, ἀπώλεια, φθορά, ὄλεθρος*, all the Greek terms which Plato in the Phædo uses to denote *extermination of life*—all those terms which Bishop Weathers himself uses in English form in this very Symposium when he desires to denote the *extinction of animal* souls, are forced out of their proper senses, in order to consist with the doc-

trine of a naturally deathless being for all men alike.\*

The term *death* or *mors* is indeed allowed, in popular language by orthodox writers, to stand for its proper meaning of extinction of life, in relation to the soul, in one single instance, namely, in forming the word *Immortality*; because when joined with a negative it then signifies *deathlessness* or *eternal conscious being* for both good and bad; just as in the text, "The worm *dieth* not," the word *dieth* is allowed to signify "ceaseth not to *live*;" because on this can be built an argument for endless misery if the "worm" be taken for the "conscience" of a sinner in Gehenna. But in all other cases the Scripture language is invested with an unnatural meaning in order to consist with the psychological system of Christendom.

It is the same with the great word *Life*. It is permitted to bear every shade of meaning except the central natural meaning of *life* properly so

\* Dean Plumptre joins with Principal Cairns in steadfastly affirming that we must exclude the idea of literal destruction from the verb *ἀπόλλυμι* in relation to the future state ("Spirits in Prison," p. 325). But it is asking too much of simple minds to desire us to believe that *ἀπώλοντο*, in 1 Cor. xv. 18, signifies *gone to ruin or endless misery*, when the same word in Ecclesiasticus xlv. 9 (Sept.) is specially explained to signify a total cessation of being. "And some there be, which have no memorial, who are perished, *ἀπώλοντο*, as though they had never been, and are become as though they had never been born."

called. Bishop Weathers lays down this law of exegesis as a sacred dogma, as if it were as clearly true as the multiplication-table. But if any one will take the trouble to try this experiment of reading the Greek Testament through, to test the possibility of making excellent sense by adopting a more "literal" meaning of all these terms, he will, I think, discover that Professor Stokes is not so far wrong in finding that these ideas not only make sense, but that a flood of light falls on the whole system of Christian doctrine respecting the Fall of Man, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, Regeneration, Salvation, Life Eternal, and Future Judgment by Destruction.

The true and complete solution, then, of the mysterious question of man's relation to a future state I find *in revelation* only, and not in natural speculation. In departing from God man has lost the knowledge of truth concerning himself. Man is a fallen but redeemed creature. Towards him God has purposes both of mercy and judgment. His eternal life includes both body and soul, and both are rendered immortal only through the power of the Divine Christ by the Holy Spirit—a prospect restricted to those who are "born of

God." But the spirits of all mankind survive in the first death, either for purposes of awful judgment and retribution, or in many cases probably (1 Peter iii. 18), for purposes of further education and salvation. The instinct of *survival* is in various forms, therefore, very widely diffused, and is misinterpreted only when it is converted into an argument for the natural and absolute immortality of all souls.

This instinct we find under many perverted forms,—under the transmigrations of Buddhism, the speculations of Plato, the Purgatorial faith of Spiritualism. But the solid foundation of immortal hope is, I think, found only in Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life," and who "hath the keys of Hades and of Death;" while for those who wilfully reject Him there is reserved a "punishment" which is "eternal," being nothing less terrible than "everlasting destruction" of "body and soul in Gehenna" (Matt. x. 28).

The doctrine of the natural immortality of all souls as separate beings is widely extended, but it is still principally localised in Europe and America. Eastern Asia (India, China, Japan, with 700,000,000 of mankind) holds pre-existence, transmigration and survival; but *pari-nirvana*, i.e., abolition of *individual* being and consciousness,

is believed to await all individual life at last. There is no Asiatic faith in the natural immortality maintained by Bishop Weathers, Principal Cairns, and Mr. Hopps, from Calcutta to Japan. [See Professor Davids in *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxix. p. 264.]

The contribution of my immediate predecessor, Principal Cairns, places me in some difficulty in concluding this paper. The general reader would scarcely find it an edifying termination to this Symposium were I to occupy much space in defending a book of my own against the minuter criticisms even of so distinguished a reviewer as Dr. Cairns—especially when the defence would be the ordinary one of theological rejoinders, that the reviewer has first misapprehended some of the positions taken by the volume criticised, and then argued on the basis of his own misconceptions. The respect due to the Principal, however, compels some notice of his observations, though unwilling to lengthen this paper, or to take advantage of succeeding him in the series, more particularly as a composition so remarkable for calmness and charity could have proceeded only, in the case of a writer occupying Dr. Cairns's position, from a self-restraint of which I am



deeply sensible. Dr. Cairns writes from the standpoint of the "Confession of Faith" of the Presbyterian Churches, and believing every word of this Confession, as no doubt he does, in the plain, grammatical sense of the terms, it is easy to see how shocking to him must appear a doctrine which strikes, if not at the root, still not very high up in the trunk, of the theological system which it is his professional duty to defend in relation to man's immortality and its consequences. If I cite a few of the positions of this Confession it will more readily appear how great credit is due to the reviewer for his gentleness in commenting upon direct denials of what to him must be most dear and sacred :—

*Confession*, chap. iv. After God had made all other creatures, He created man, male and female, *with reasonable and immortal souls*.

Chap. iii. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, *and others fore-ordained to everlasting death*." "These angels and men, thus predestined and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed ; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." "The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, *and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin*, to the praise of His glorious justice."

Chap. vi. "Our first parents, by their sin, fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became *dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.*" "They being the root of mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same *death in sin* and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." "Every sin, both *original* and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, *and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal.*"

Chap. ix. "Man by his fall into a state of sin hath lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, *and dead in sin*, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto."

Chap. xxxiii. "The end of God's appointing the judgment-day is for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and of His justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient. For then the righteous shall go into everlasting life; *but the wicked*, who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, *shall be cast into eternal torments*, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

By these citations from the "Confession of Faith" it will appear how steadfastly Dr. Cairns adheres to not only its general scheme of doctrine

on the nature and destiny of man, but also to the traditional methods of Biblical exegesis on which the system is founded.

I may be permitted to present the result in a brief summary :—

1. The Confession commences with the statement that Adam was created immortal or deathless, as the Eternal Being Himself, with respect to his soul, but as to his body susceptible of death in the sense of total dissolution. 2. That he was placed in Paradise on trial for everlasting life, under the menace of *death* for disobedience; while, notwithstanding, apart from eating the "Tree of Life," the effect of which would be to cause him to "live for ever" (Gen. iii.), the chief element in his complex nature was already incapable of dissolution, as Bishop Weathers also affirms; so that the privilege held out to him really was to escape *death of the body* in the literal sense of the threatening, and *death of the soul* only in two metaphorical senses of the term—spiritual alienation from God and eternal misery. 3. That failing in his probation, he brought upon himself death of the body, and two metaphorical deaths of the soul; and upon his posterity—according to a recent more lenient interpretation of professed Calvinists—simply temporal death

(which system does not render any very lucid account of the natural state and legal prospects of the souls of the posterity), but, according to the Confession (at once more ancient and orthodox), both temporal death and eternal misery of the soul. 4. That, therefore, all mankind are now born, before they have committed personal sins, justly liable to everlasting misery ; partly through "imputation" of Adam's sin, partly through natural immortality, and partly through the possession of a nature necessarily corrupt in all its springs and developments, even "elect infants" being naturally under this curse, as St. Augustine taught, and delivered from it only by predestination to life. 5. That Christ appeared to bear the "curse of the law," which was death,—a curse which signified eternal misery of the soul in the instance of Adam, and signifies the same thing in the "second death" of the wicked, but was taken to signify "death of the cross" only in the person of the Saviour. 6. That in consequence of this death of Christ (which *excluded both the metaphorical ideas of death*—alienation from God and eternal misery), death, in all its senses, literal and metaphorical, has been vanquished for the believer, and his physical death shall be removed by a glorious resurrection. 7. That

although the Mosaic law entered "that the offence might abound," it *made no mention of eternal misery* as the curse of the law; while, nevertheless, Christ's death delivers us from that legal curse of which no mention is made by Moses.

8. That while the penalty for despising the law of Moses was literal death, under two or three witnesses, the penalty of despising a system of mercy shall be *infinitely* more tremendous than that, being to suffer misery in hell throughout endless duration, so long as the necessary being endures; the punishment for rejecting the Divine mercy being, therefore, infinitely more terrible than that declared in the law for rejecting the Divine justice. 9. That although the major part of mankind has been altogether deprived under Divine providence of the means of grace, without which, as the Confession declares, salvation is impossible, they have been destined and absolutely fore-ordained,—unknown to themselves,—to an eternal existence in bliss or in "torment,"—the *redemption* by Christ having added, in the case of the damned and non-elect, this incalculable burden to the original curse on Adam, that their *bodies* shall at the last day be raised *from the dead to die a second death*, which signifies living for ever "in torments."

This will be admitted to be, I think, a correct interpretation of the Confession, and of the drift of Dr. Cairns's paper, which is founded upon it.

During the last thirty or forty years, among other movements, partly psychological, partly exegetical, partly theological, a very determined effort has been in Germany, Switzerland, France, England, America, and in the missionary world, to substitute for the frightful tangle of Augustinian definitions just summarised a simpler method of understanding Holy Scripture, from one end to the other, on the questions of Death, Life, and Immortality. This is known as the Doctrine of Life in Christ—Dr. Cairns calls it my “system.” I might as justly call the Confession his system. Both are very ancient, but we hold that one is more ancient than the other; and what has been attempted of late is only a revival and general diffusion of a scheme of interpretation which is to be found just as clearly in the pages of Irenæus at the end of the second century, as Dr. Cairns's is to be found in Augustine in the fourth. We have had not a little to suffer in this enterprise from spiritual excommunication; but the movement is now so widely aided by many of the ablest scholars and theologians of Scotland, England, America, and the Continent, that the result has proved the solid

grounds on which the modern witnesses built their earliest remonstrances.

This system of opinion on "the foundations of belief in human immortality" finds its basis in Divine revelation alone. It accepts whatever partial and imperfect contributions to the hope or fear of a future existence can be offered by pagan thought, but it holds that *the main object* of Divine revelation has been to make clearly known the Incarnate Word as the true Author of everlasting life for sinful man—that eternal life of which the prospect was lost for the race by the sin of Adam. The narrative of that sin and its consequences is authenticated to us and expanded by the express words both of Christ and His Apostles. The idea which simple-minded readers would gather from it is that man was condemned to absolute death for sin, but that Divine mercy has interposed for the purpose of "destroying the works of the devil" by giving us eternal life through the mediation of the "Seed of the woman." As I have before explained, this system closely connects the astounding fact of the Divine Incarnation with the equally astounding fact of human redemption to a life immortal and Divine; so that to attribute a natural "immortality to man's soul" is to misconceive the very chief revelation of the Gospel, which teaches us to

find the immortality of both body and soul in union with the Messiah, the Divine Lifegiver.

It can scarcely be denied that if the design had been, in the actual language of the Bible, with its numerous writings of many ages, from the time of Moses to St. John, 1500 or 1600 years, to teach this doctrine of an immortality coming to man not by his own nature but by the grace of God in redemption, no different or more appropriate terminology could have been generally employed to convey that signification. First of all, the entire collection is destitute, as we have seen, of a single explicit affirmation respecting *the deathless nature of the human soul*, regarded as the basis of hope for immortality, such as we have heard so naturally laid down again and again, by the eloquent writers who hold it, in this Symposium. There is not one line of argument from Genesis to Malachi, from Matthew to the Revelation, of the same sort which has filled column after column of the *Homiletic*. There is not a single Hopps, or Horder, or Cairns among the prophets of the Bible, much less one who knows, like the Catholic Bishop of Amycla, about the "essence of the soul" as the cause of its living for ever. Now if men will consider it, this is a most wonderful fact. If the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is true, an immortality which



is not merely survival, but an eternal immortality, and if that be the real basis of hope for us (as so many have declared), why does it not appear in Moses, in the Histories and Psalms and Prophecies of the Old Testament, in the Gospels and Epistles of the New, at least once or twice in 1600 years? Why does it require all the skill and eloquence and bold assertion to which we have now listened in this council to enforce it upon men's belief?

It cannot for a moment be conceded to Dr. Cairns that the acknowledged indications of faith in the *survival* of the soul in the Old Testament are indications either of the *faith* or the *fact*, in all cases of eternal survival. I have already shown that the ancient modes of thought in Egypt, whence Israel came, employed precisely the Old Testament language as to the survival of all souls in death, while they believed *only in the immortality of the good*, the wicked being destined to perish. In a word, there was no faith in intrinsic immortality. It was regarded as a special gift of God.

The language of the Old Testament is consistent throughout with the belief of the eternal life of the servants of God, and of the eternal destruction of the wicked; and it is consistent, when taken in its simple sense, with no other belief. Israel and

Egypt were here in unity, both of them, doubtless, inheriting the primitive tradition of patriarchal faith.

If we turn to the Gospels, what do we discover in the teaching of the Lord Himself? In His utterances relating to the future of God's servants He almost uniformly speaks of them as alone inheriting *Everlasting Life*. In John's Gospel He uses these terms 35 times; 19 times calling the saints' inheritance "endless life," and 16 times either life, or designating it by some phrase that refers to something in close connection with life, such as Resurrection of life, Bread of life, Light of life. Thus in John vi.—"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς*, in yourselves."

In the Acts of the Apostles and the Apostolic Epistles the writers set forth the effects of faith in Christ, just in the sense in which our Lord appears to have used them, no less than 55 times. We see then that life and everlasting life are the terms which Christ and His Apostles almost constantly employed to denote the destiny of the righteous. Conversely, the Gospels and Epistles with equal pertinacity adhere *almost uniformly* to language respecting the doom of the unsaved which, taken in its simple sense, teaches, as does the Old Testa-

ment, that they shall *die, perish, be destroyed, not see life*, but suffer *destruction, everlasting destruction*, "destruction," says Christ, "*of body and soul in Gehenna.*"

By what law shall we determine the meaning of these terms? The idea expressed by the words *life, live*, to whatever applied, though descriptive of a very complex state, is itself one of the primary and simple notions of the mind, and does not admit of being broken up into simpler notions or expressed in simpler words. In ordinary speech, life always means life, whether used of vegetables, of animals, of the human body, or of the human soul; as, for example, in the phrases—"There is now no *life* in his body;" "Does the soul *live* for ever?" A house is a house and nothing else, whether furnished or unfurnished, and life is simply *being alive*, without injecting into the meaning of the word the idea of happiness at all. But since life without enjoyment is a pleasureless condition, the special thing which makes life desirable is sometimes spoken of by a common figure as being the thing itself; just as we say—Knowledge is power,—Wealth is influence. But it is only in theology that men have been found to say that *life* is *happiness*, and is no longer life at all in the proper meaning of the term.

Dean Plumptre and Dr. Cairns both cite John xvii. 2—"This is life eternal, to know Thee"—to prove that "life" means "the knowledge of God." As well insist, with the Romanists, that "*This is my body*" proves transubstantiation, or that our Lord's words, "His commandment is life everlasting," proves that obedience is immortality.

And why this war against *life*? Because men have for many centuries taken to the Bible a psychological system on man's natural immortality which has perverted and twisted out of its proper meaning all its language on the *death* that comes by sin, and the *life* that comes only by regeneration of the Spirit through the Incarnation of the Son of God, and includes both body and spirit in its immortalising gift. This is to go contrary to the example of the Bible, which, as Dr. Cairns admits in one marvellously inconsistent sentence, "does not proceed in the ordinary way of extra-scriptural psychology in grounding the doctrine (of immortality) upon a clear distinction between a material and immaterial, and hence a perishable and imperishable, element in man's constitution."

But Dr. Cairns will demand of these new "systematisers" what they make of the figurative language of the New Testament respecting *death*. "Let the dead bury their dead." "Thou hast

a name that thou livest, and art dead." "She that liveth in pleasure ζῶσα τέθνηκε, living is dead." "Ye being dead in (through, Revised Version) your sins, to you God hath given life again together with Christ, and raised us up with Him, and made us sit together in heavenly places." Is it not clear, it will be said, that here we have the metaphorical sense of death, on which Augustinianism founds its doctrine of the Fall? My reply is:—Assuredly we have in all these cases a figurative use of the word death, but the figure is in the *tense*, and not in the *radical meaning* of the word. That is an invention of an anti-biblical psychology. The figurative uses of death are common in Scripture itself: "*Thou art but a dead man* for Sarah, Abraham's wife." The *future* event is spoken of as present. "I saw the dead stand before God." The *past* event is spoken of as present. We were "dead through trespasses and sins," that is, we were *under sentence of death*, of utter destruction, through our sins. And when we were thus "dead in sins," God "raised us up *together with Christ*, and gave us life *together with Him*," so that the state of death was one from which Christ could be raised along with us, and the life was one which we could share with Him; which would have been impos-

sible if the death had meant what the Confession and Dr. Cairns intend by it, a *state of alienation from God*.

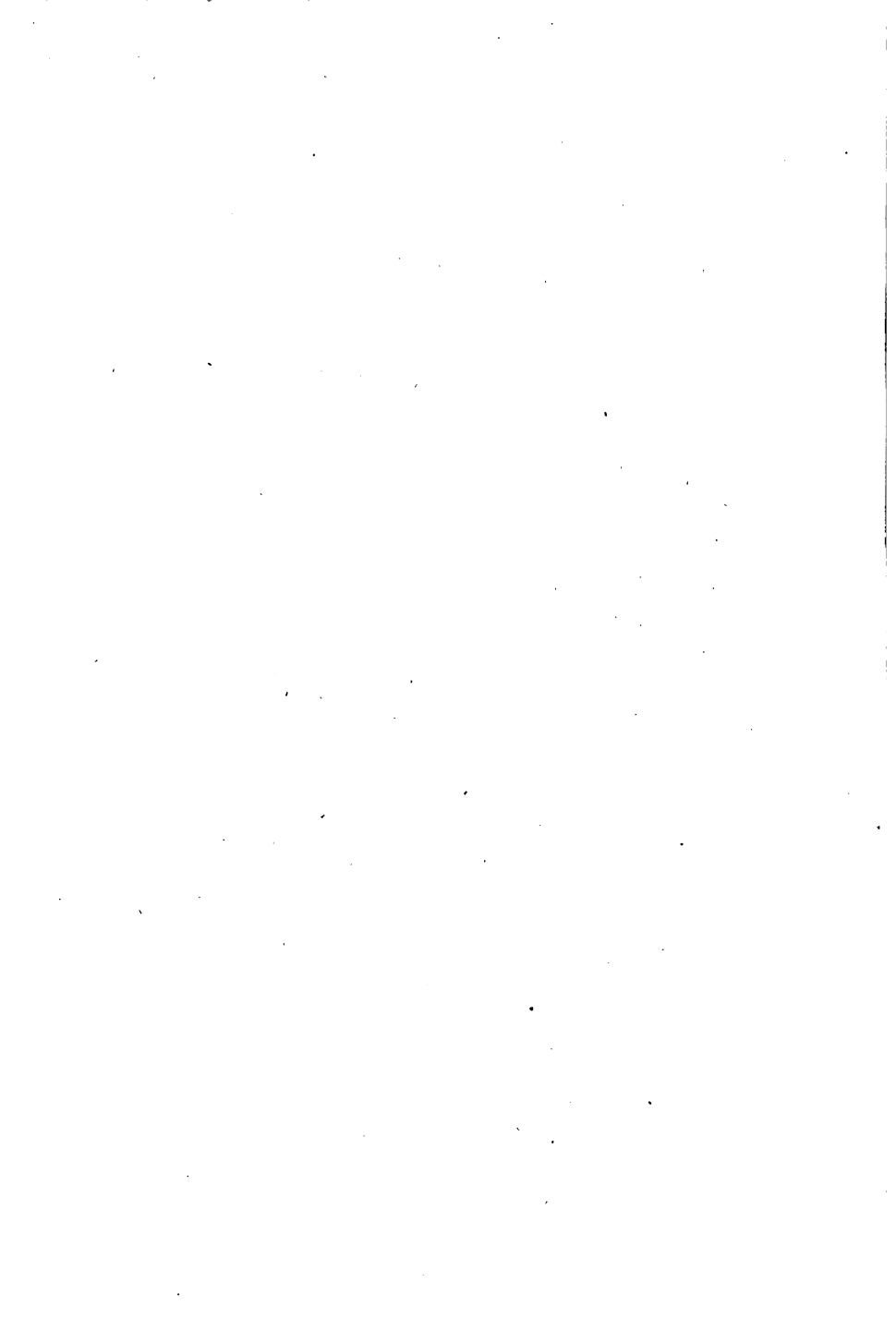
So also in Scripture a man is said to be *dead to the law, dead to the world, dead to sin*, the meaning being that he *ceases to live* in certain relations with them. When the Apostles cried out, "Lord save us, we perish," they did not indicate that they were in a state of endless suffering, but in danger of losing their lives. The figure *prolepsis* explains every case cited by Dr. Cairns, yet leaves the radical signification of words unaffected throughout the books of Scripture. If the Bible consists of a mass of Hebrew and Greek words which are to be taken in non-natural senses when treating on the most important topics, surely it is poetry to speak of it as a "revelation."

I have now by a counter-statement sought to reply to the vigorous indictment of Dr. Cairns; and for what remains unnoticed must refer to the published works of many authors who have, of late years, defended the doctrine of human immortality through the Divine Incarnation; the one form of evangelical faith which seems likely to win the sympathy of modern Europe or antiquated Asia.

The revival of the ante-Nicene exegesis on these subjects has been attempted many times during the past fifteen centuries, but has, until lately, been time after time successfully suppressed by popular clamour or ecclesiastical authority. Pious women are nearly all on the side of the most terrific doctrines. There is little chance, however, of a successful suppression of the present revival. Some of the very greatest men are lending their sanction to the movement—a movement which is indeed fatal, in the proportion of its success, to both Unitarianism and Universalism; but is espoused with ever-increasing energy by evangelical scholars in all parts of the world. Dr. Dorner of Berlin in his latest years, in writing to M. Byse, the French translator of “Life in Christ” (without committing himself dogmatically), not only acknowledged that the work itself was “thoroughly scientific” (*gründliche wissenschaftliche*), but declared that its doctrine “appeared to him much preferable to the theory of the final re-establishment of all things, since, under the form given it in this volume, it recognises much better the rights both of human liberty and of the justice of God.” Under the ægis of Dr. Dorner’s name—to which might be added the names of Rothe, Gess, Bonnet, Dale, Cæsar, Malan, C. F. Hudson,

Babut, Lotze, Schultz, Jonker (one of the editors of the *Theologische Studien*), the accomplished scholar E. Petavel, Bushnell and Renouvier, all of them men of high rank in their different departments—it may perhaps be permitted to protest against the summary style of much popular English and American criticism on a doctrine which has a good right, after a long thirty years' war, to invoke at least respectful treatment from its adversaries. In every case of divided authorities it is necessary to remember that while a small minority dissenting from a popular tenet may be supposed individually to have studied the matter under discussion, majorities are formed of persons nine-tenths of whom have never been persuaded to examine with care the evidence for traditional opinion ; so that the authorities *pro* and *con* must, in the early stages of a controversy, be weighed rather than counted.





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